

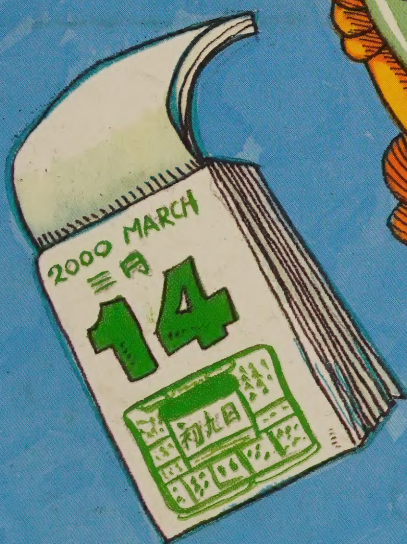
CABLE AND SATELLITE ASIA

MARCH/APRIL 2000

an Informa Media publication



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10 ☐ Programme Producer
11 ☐ Programme Distributor
12 ☐ National Broadcaster
13 ☐ Local Broadcaster
14 ☐ Telecoms Equipment Manufacturer/Supplier
15 ☐ Telecoms Service Supplier/Operator
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- 51 ☐ Recommend/Specify
52 ☐ Approve
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march/april 2000

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ASIA

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the House of Li

WHEN the dust settles on Richard Li's precocious take-over of Hong Kong's dominant telecommunications company, Cable & Wireless HKT, one family will control almost 40 percent of Hong Kong's Stock Exchange. The territory should, suggested a local newspaper columnist, rename the Special Administrative Region "The House of Li" in deference to the Li family's dominance of the local economy.

Does Hong Kong mind this peculiar — and possibly dangerous — situation? Not on your life. The odd bleating from "opposition" politicians was drowned out in the stampede to fling money at the latest Li-backed venture — an Internet start-up that's more fledgling than most. Very few seemed to care that tom.com is more about a catchy name than a Web anything at this stage. We love it, yelled hundreds of thousands of Hong Kongers, elbowing through the riots in order to get their IPO applications in on time.

Analysts acknowledged that the crowds weren't in it because they knew — or cared — what tom.com was. They were, rather, backing King Li (aka Li Ka-shing). "It's better to stand here for a day than to work for a year," said one man in the queue, echoing not only the get-rich-quick greed that is so much a part of the new economy (and, some will say, of Hong Kong itself), but also total obeisance to the amazing powers of Li.

Right now, Hong Kong's First Family seems unstoppable. And Richard Li, like it or not, is part of that family. At 33, Prince Li was until now best known in the television world for putting US\$125 million into something called Satellite Television Asia Region in 1990/91, and selling it as STAR TV a little more than two years later for US\$871 million. Not bad, although Rupert Murdoch was apparently less than delighted when he found out not only that he had paid too much, but that the sale didn't include the satellite uplink licence, which was held by the Li family company, Hutchison, until a few years ago.

But where would the younger Li be without his father's money in the first place, is the most common jibe. It's one which hasn't escaped Hong Kong's First Son, who is, according to some of the press he has been given, tetchy even about the word "father". Well, what did we want him to do, exactly? Take drugs and die in a five-star hotel room?

By some accounts, Li the younger is not short of a horrible rich-kid habit or two, including, some say, making girls cry. You don't have to be a rich boy to do that, believe me. What he has that no-one else does is the nerve to take on Singapore Telecom and Rupert Murdoch — and win.

Now he's offering us an entertainment platform that is every bit as visionary as Star TV was 10 years ago. The hurdles in making his ambitious convergent Network of the World (NOW) platform work are clearly tremendous, as he will undoubtedly find when he launches the English-language service across Asia and tries to make India (and everyone else) pay more than US\$30 a month for it.

The world is also quite wise, one hopes, to the smoke and mirrors tactics of building a castle and then offloading it for a huge profit before anyone realises that there's very little inside that isn't going to take a fabulous amount of money to fix. So he may not have that option.

On the other hand, he is a member of the House of Li...

Janine Stein

Janine Stein
the Editor



The expert TOUCH

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last dance

Snippets of life on Asia's cable and satellite television scene

DANCING GIRLS

Rathikant Basu's new bid for satellite glory

TAPPING away on the grave of Rathikant Basu's News Corp career in India, former dancer and socialite Malika Sarabhai has been hired to head the Gujarati channel of Basu's new company, Broadcast Worldwide (BWW). Having graduated from the prestigious

percent has been picked up by Rupert Murdoch's Indian operation. Basu expects to hold a 20 percent stake and is said to be hoping for Star TV's stake to be raised to 20 percent as well. Star TV, however, says an increase is not likely.

Word on the street is that he is having a touch more trouble than he is accustomed to in navigating the corridors of funding power in India, mainly because the market is wary of his ability to deliver.

according to one insider.

Initially, sales and distribution of Basu's channels will be handled by Star TV, which also has first right to the services for its branded channel bouquet. As part of the deal, Basu has agreed not to plunder Star TV's staff ranks. In shades of the old agreement between Star TV and one-time partner, Zee TV, Basu has also pledged not to compete in Star TV's traditional areas of expertise, such as sports or Hindi-language entertainment programming. Ironical, really, given that he was the one who pushed so hard for Star TV's Hindi-language strategy, moving well beyond the bounds of the agreement with Zee.

The regional channels, with 80 percent Indian investment, will qualify to uplink from India. Basu has indicated his broadcast platform will be the Insat-2E satellite.

Regional channels currently get a miniscule portion of the Rs3,000 crore (US\$675 million) TV ad spend, but Basu expects the regional market to grow quickly.

This optimism in the regional business is not his alone. Zee Telefilm's chairman, Subhash Chandra, has already launched his own slew of regional channels under the Alpha brand in exactly the same markets into which Basu is hoping to make his mark. With nothing on air so far, Basu has not yet been forced to prove his assertions that the Alpha programming quality will be no match for what he has planned.

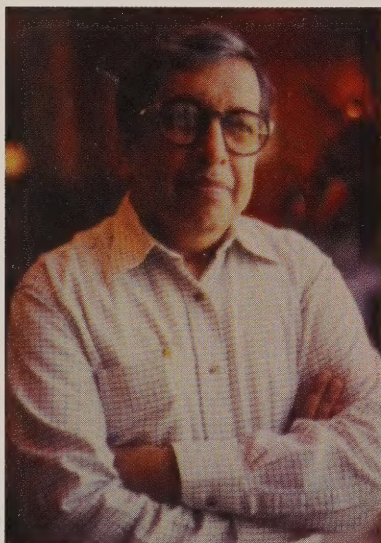
TWIST AND SHOUT

Journalists don suits in the climb up the executive ladder

FORMER journalists are doing okay in the broadcast executive ranks. Leader among them, Foxtel chief executive, Tom Mockridge, is the new CEO of the fledgling pay-TV/Internet joint venture between Star TV and Cable & Wireless HKT (soon to be PCCW-HKT once the take-over by Richard Li's Pacific Century CyberWorks goes through).

Newer to the boardroom table is former broadcast industry journo, Simon Twiston Davies, who takes over the executive director reigns at the ailing Cable & Satel-

It's very difficult to raise money for satellite channels these days... add a dotcom component and your life gets a whole lot easier



rathikant basu

Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Ahmedabad, Sarabhai has had little or no experience in broadcasting or managing media companies. Her official title is chief executive officer. The channel is called Tara, which translates as "star", and is scheduled to launch in June with an expected Rs110 crore (US\$25 million) investment.

In his new incarnation as an entrepreneur, Basu, a long-time government employee, is said to be knocking on doors to raise the Rs120 crore (US\$27 million) he needs to pin some legs onto his new venture, which includes the launch of four regional TV channels — Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi and Punjabi. The Bengali channel is expected to be first off the block, with a mid-April launch slated.

Total investment in BWW is said to be in the region of US\$100 million. About 10

The former head of state broadcaster Doordarshan, Basu, remember, was originally brought aboard News Corp's team in India as a dream contact with all the right government telephone numbers in his rolodex. When neither the DTH project nor the regional channels he was charged with launching materialised, Basu's News Corp days were numbered. Rumours are also rife that Star TV's commitment to him and his company, despite declarations to the contrary, are iffy after October.

So far, no investment deals have been signed (or announced) which, according to those in the investment community, is not surprising given not only Basu's track record but the new investment community love affair with Internet start-ups. "It's very difficult to raise money for satellite channels these days... add a dotcom component and your life gets a whole lot easier,"

lite Broadcasting Association of Asia (Casbaa) from March 1.

Mockridge's arrival in Hong Kong can't come a moment too soon for the Star TV-HKT joint venture (which was intact at press time despite uncertainty over its future in the Richard Li-owned HKT era), still provisionally called DTV. Although a preliminary task force has been charged with opening discussions with various vendors, the group appears to be directionless and powerless, according to programming industry sources. Star TV says it is a sign of its commitment to the joint venture that it is willing to commit such a senior body to the position.

The joint venture plans to launch its service before the end of 2000, pending a government decision on the new licences required.

A firm Murdoch man, Mockridge has held the top Foxtel job since January 1997 and is also a director of Rupert Murdoch's News Ltd and of Sky Network Television in New Zealand. He joined News Ltd in 1991, and worked on projects such as the Foxtel start-up and the launch of the Ansett International airline, in which Murdoch used to hold a stake.

Mockridge's switch to the private sector follows a trajectory through Australia's government offices; he once worked for former Australian federal treasurer, Paul Keating, before Keating became prime minister. He joined Keating's office in 1984 as a press secretary and subsequently became his private secretary.

Also in Hong Kong (although there is talk of a relocation to Singapore because so many of the Casbaa board members call the island-state home), Twiston Davies has been charged with turning around an

organisation with a rock-bottom reputation and sadly depleted coffers.

He also takes over at a time of much head-shaking among rank-and-file members over the decision to increase subscription rates to US\$1,000 for associate members, US\$5,000 for corporate members and US\$15,000 for patron members.

Twiston Davies is upbeat by the task at hand, as he should be given the turbo-charge the organisation could receive from the gone-crazy online industry. But first, he says, "I want to make the trains run on time". Sensible, given Casbaa's previous record for losing the timetable entirely.

With the slate wiped clean on past misdemeanours and a Year Zero declared for Casbaa, Twiston Davies and the more useful Casbaa board members are

redefining the organisation's goals. "We're looking to a completely different landscape," he says.

The so-called Internet-driven "new economy" is central to these plans. The cable and satellite industry, Twiston Davies adds, has the pipes and the content that are so attractive to new media players.

Strategy is expected to be finalised in April. Watch this space.

TEN COMMANDMENTS

AsiaSat celebrates its 10th anniversary

A DECADE ago come April 7, AsiaSat-1 was the first Western satellite to be launched aboard a Chinese Long March 3 rocket. The first transmissions were in May 1990, and the first customer was the Ministry of Information of the Union of Myanmar, which saw the benefits of using the region's first commercial satellite to spread the government word to Burma's nether regions. Ten years on, at the end of February 2000, AsiaSat CEO, Peter Jackson, stood in a hotel room in Hong Kong reporting a 24 percent drop in profits — and the company's share price rose.

Between Myanmar and the millennium, AsiaSat has built a blue-chip satellite operation and a solid reputation. So that when Jackson says he's optimistic about the prospects for the year ahead after two years of relative hardship and southward-bound numbers, everyone believes him.

For the year to December 1999, turnover was down 11 percent from 1998's HK\$903 million (US\$116.2 million) to HK\$807 million (US\$103.9 million) and

MILLENNIUM MOMENTS

"50 of my best friends know
everything about me except
what I look like"

*Hong Kong 16-year old, on the
impact of the Internet on his life*

*Source: "Winning the Hearts
& Minds of Teens", a Leo Burnett
presentation quoting Greg Taucher,
Head of DDB Asia.*



Which channel immerses yourself
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profit was down to HK\$354 million (US\$45.6 million). Operating costs decreased by one percent to HK\$189 million (US\$24.3 million), of which HK\$38 million (US\$4.9 million) was related to provision for bad and doubtful debts.

AsiaSat-2 ended 1999 with 74 percent utilisation. The newer satellite, AsiaSat-3S, came in at 49 percent. By the end of the first quarter 2000, Jackson says he is confident AsiaSat-3S' C-Band capacity will be fully utilised. Ku-Band capacity, which is new in this orbital slot, is a harder sell. "We are not anticipating a very fast take up on Ku-Band... but we expect to start signing deals soon," he adds.

Downward pressure on pricing could continue with an ongoing excess of transponder capacity in key markets. Through the worst of Asia's economic crisis, Jackson says the company was able to limit price cuts. "Prices are now recovering," he says. "And that trend will continue."

If Star TV was the anchor client that put AsiaSat on the satellite map, Star's newly shrunken demands could leave the company with a great big hole to fill. "We believe there may be new entrants this year," Jackson says, not listing them. Richard Li's Pacific Century CyberWorks, which aims to be the biggest Internet/broadband company in Asia, is already among the new customers, with content up on AsiaSat-3S at the moment and the option for more space.

But, Jackson adds, the future is more likely to hold lots of smaller players than the large transponder tenants of the analogue era.

The inevitable questions about AsiaSat-4 have to be asked, and Jackson is quite open about the to-be-decided status of the new satellite, whose presence on Asia's launch schedule is not as crucial now as it was before AsiaSat-3S went up. The reality is that the company is holding off until the very last minute because it wants to see what happens with the BSS frequencies in Hong Kong, which have still not been awarded. "We want to know whether we should add these to the satellite or not," says Jackson's second-in-command, Bill Wade. The new AsiaSat-4 launch date is in the first half of 2002.

As far as investments into any other schemes or platforms, the simple answer is no — or not really. "We do not plan to make significant investments in any other business but our own, which is putting satellites up," Jackson says. If they do happen, movement into other, as yet

undisclosed, ventures will, initially, involve low expenditure and will be long-term. "There will not be a short-term cash drain on the company," Jackson insists.

The biggest challenge for AsiaSat as it enters its second decade is a lot more mundane than picking a new hot shot bandwagon upon which it should jump. If you look back upon last year, Jackson adds, "the biggest challenge was keeping strong and not dropping prices". Wade continues: "Our biggest challenge now is that the demand for capacity has improved much quicker than anticipated... We need to manage that demand and push Ku-Band utilisation."

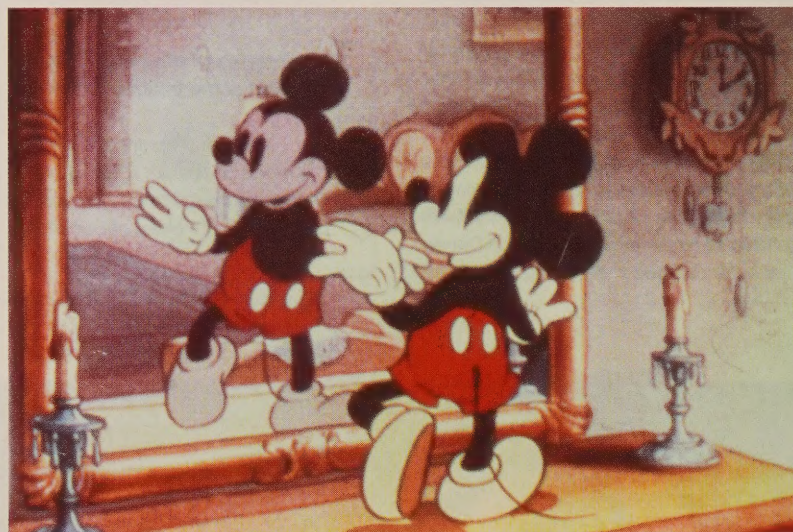
As for AsiaSat-1, which started life as Westar-VI launched by the Space Shuttle in 1984 and brought back to earth after it failed to zoom into geostationary orbit, it is slowly being put out to pasture. The aging satellite is now operating in an inclined orbit at 122° E, and will be retired when AsiaSat-4 is launched. Its lasting legacy, as prophesised by AsiaSat's then-CEO Terry Seddon on April 7, 1990, will be that things will, indeed, never be the same for the two billion people who lived and watched television in its footprint.

region outside of Australia and Taiwan would pay for them anymore, although Disney execs won't say so), Disney launched its English-language Southeast Asia service in Singapore on March 1.

It was the fourth distribution deal Disney signed since January this year for the new regional service. The Disney Channel Asia is also carried in Malaysia, the Philippines and Brunei. The former Disney Malaysia service, which was carried on monopoly satellite platform Astro, has been folded into the regional channel. A distribution deal for the Australia service has also been signed with Australia's Austar for carriage from April 1.

Disney isn't saying what the financial terms of the new deals are, but it seems certain that the company has dropped its multi-million dollar minimum guarantees from each country in favour of something a little more flexible.

Without giving much away, Disney's newly promoted executive vice president and managing director for Walt Disney Television International, Asia and Pacific, Robin Paxton, says the idea is to "gently change the strategy to try to view every market in a flexible way".



mickey mouse

MOUSE TALES

Disney changes tack in Asia

DISNEY is giving its characters whiplash with a rapid-fire series of distribution deals that have accompanied the network's new regional strategy for Asia.

Setting aside its customised country-specific ideals (because no-one in the

The new regional channel, he says, "is a way of getting into the smaller markets". He also denies a major shift in direction. "We still have the view that, ultimately, local TV is what works. This is an interim stage, a way of getting into the markets where the pay-TV system is still small."

Paxton says Disney's strategy is still localisation for each market. When will that happen? "That," he says, "will depend

market by market on uptake and growth and the general economic development of the pay-TV situation... It remains our objective that Disney television should be presented in the most locally sensitive way possible".

The 1,500 people — cable operators, broadcasters, regulators and their families and ex-president Corazon Aquino, who was guest of honour — didn't appear even vaguely concerned about the implications of Disney's long-term strategy for Asia-Pacific as they poured into the formal launch party in the Philippines in early March. Along with the Disney characters rolled out to mark the occasion (each with its own minder and lists of do's and don'ts from company HQ in Burbank), in came the Manila Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ryan Cayabyab, the CompanY (the most awarded recording vocal group in the country), Whiplash (a pop and jazz dance group) and vocalists Audie Gemorra and Tricia Amper Jimenez.

The Disney Channel is carried on HomeCable and Destiny Cable. An agreement with DTH broadcaster GV has also been signed but is yet to take effect.

Similar high-profile on the ground events will take place in March and April in Singapore, Malaysia and Brunei.

Meanwhile, the network is closer than it has ever been to a deal in India. A Disney channel for Hong Kong is being looked at, although it's more likely to be a take on the current customised Taiwan service than the Southeast Asian service. Japan remains the pay-TV pot of gold and, Paxton says, "we will leave no stone unturned" to find the right distribution relationship for a 24-hour service.

and then there was...

AUSTRALIA

FOLLOWING pressure from the production sector, communications minister, Richard Alston, orders an investigation into whether pay-TV docu-channels, including Discovery and National Geographic, should be forced to spend 10 percent of programme budgets on local productions. At the same time, Alston's credibility plummets when he admits he is not a pay-TV subscriber.

More tension between the Foxtel partners erupts after OpenTV Inc announces a deal with Foxtel for interactive TV through its satellite set-top boxes. Foxtel, which has 100,000 digital satellite subs, says OpenTV will be used only in the current satellite boxes and that no decision has been made on other services, including those on Telstra's cable platform.

There are no such skirmishes on the Internet/convergence front. At Home Network Australia, the joint venture between Excite@Home and C&W Optus, unveils its online content partnerships for the Optus@Home broadband cable service. On the line-up is video content from, among others, Bloomberg and CNN.

The pay-TV sector passes the five-year mark with more than 1.2 million subscribers or 18 percent of Australia's 6.5 million households. Foxtel has 590,000 connections; Austar more than 370,000; and C&W Optus TV an estimated 230,000.

CHINA

MYSTERY surrounds China's latest ban on, of all things, the Cartoon Network. Programmers

shrug their shoulders and say, "that's China..." and carry on with their business, hoping that this, too, will pass.

Other programmers are mentioned on the latest missive, Document Number 38 (1999), from the dour halls of television power in Beijing. Eighteen channels (including Sony Entertainment Channel, Cinemax, NHK Entertainment, Phoenix, ESPN and CNN) are allowed to beam into hotel rooms, but the order bans TNT & Cartoon Network and Japan's global service NHK World until year end.

As far as using "raw material" to spice up their local services, Yunan television channel operators can forget all about MTV, TNT, WTN and Reuters. But, in Document Number 65, the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television has green lighted some Discovery footage. The same commandments have apparently been sent out in Sichuan province.

Things are looking easier for the hardware guys. A June roll-out plan for China's much-touted digital cable system is unveiled, and the scramble for a piece of the action intensifies.

Hong Kong-listed mainland computer manufacturer, Legend Computer Systems Ltd, and digital software company, NDS Group Plc, sign a deal in early March to create a Legend-branded digital set-top box specifically for China. Although the box is designed for use across all digital broadcast platforms, its first target is clearly the digital cable market. Authorities have not announced box vendors yet, but logic says they will pick more than one.

Meanwhile, local newspapers speak of a US\$20-million regional network — China's first — involving China Aerospace



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24hours a day

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International Holdings Ltd (Casil) and the Jiangsu Provincial TV Bureau, among others. Casil and Jiangsu already have a working relationship, and 13 Jiangsu cities are on track to receive broadband services in March. Hopes are for a 15 percent penetration of Jiangsu's 7.3 million cable homes in two years, and 50 percent penetration in 10 years.

With its eye on Fujian, Hong Kong washing machine and TV manufacturing company, Leading Spirit High-Tech, puts its hand up for 30 percent of a proposed cable TV operation. The bid will kick in if and when regulations allow foreigners equity holdings in local cable TV networks.

HONG KONG

AT the same time as Richard Li's successful offer for a controlling stake in Cable & Wireless HKT (see page 12), the tom.com Internet start-up backed by his father, Li Ka-shing, causes chaos in Hong Kong streets when it launches its IPO. Few know what tom.com stands for, but the Li family backing seems to give everyone the confidence they need to empty their bank accounts into a company with a very basic Web site, no clear vision for what it's going to offer in the future, and absolutely no idea when it's going to earn its first dollar.

The frenzy all but drowns out any possible hoopla over the appointment of a new secretary for information technology and broadcasting, Carrie Yau. She replaces K.C. Kwong, who has ditched the civil service in favour of a multi-million dollar job in the private sector.

No-one is expecting any fireworks; Yau, who has been a government employee for more than 20 years, was formerly the government's director of administration. She was also deputy secretary for security in the run up to Hong Kong's return to China in 1997. Her first task is to oversee the introduction of Hong Kong's first pay-TV competition, which should happen this year — or as soon as she issues licences.

INDIA

THE Singapore-based HBO Asia joint venture's worst nightmares come true when Turner International, Warner Brothers and HBO International announce their solo entry into India. HBO India's official launch is slated for March 22. Turner takes the distribution and marketing lead here, despite advanced negotiations with Sony Enter-



sandy brown

tainment Television for the task.

Like HBO's India strategy, another long-running tale is Ronnie Screwvala's IPO, which is now scheduled for mid-2000. The latest is that his United Television (UTV) is consolidating operations into a single pan-Asian company to increase its value. The whole idea is to soothe would-be investors who may be put off by the current convulsion. There is also the unsettled see-saw issue of News Corp's involvement.

The saga doesn't end there. As if there hasn't already been enough pontificating about DTH satellite television for the past three years, the Union government appoints yet another group of ministers to re-examine the issue. No time frame is set, which is probably a wise move since no-one would believe them anyway.

By the end of February, ESPN Star Sports (ESS) celebrates the collapse of the latest cable operators boycott in Mumbai. Intense consumer pressure is thought to have played a large part in ending the action, even though cable operators accuse ESS of striking under-the-table deals with the major operators.

At the same time, the industry starts talking about ESS managing director Sandy Brown's contract, and what he's going to do when it ends towards the end of this year. Of course, Internet noises are being made all over the place, but Brown is not saying a word.

The Internet is causing a buzz of its own in India, with Zee Telefilms attempting to raise US\$1.5 billion from overseas investors to fund its Internet and new media development. A timetable is yet to be announced.

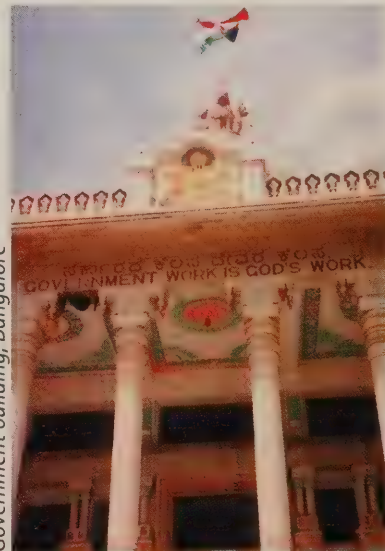
Although the IT and film industries celebrate the latest Union budget, broadcasters and broadcast hardware manufacturers are less than amused. "We were hoping the duties on imported hardware would be reduced, but nothing," says one international supplier. Cinema

cameras and film-related equipment is given the Bollywood red carpet, with duties slashed from 40 to 25 percent. Duty on raw materials for the manufacture of optical fibre is also slashed, which is a bonus to cable guys upgrading networks.

INDONESIA

STAR TV is said to be close to settling its long-running multi-million dollar dispute with Peter Gontha's Indovision in Indonesia. No-one is holding their breath on a date for the peace-making because, as one insider said, "anything can happen". But indications are that the former partners are both eager to close the book on an unpleasant chapter. If they kiss and make up, Star TV will return to Indonesia in a meaningful way (ie. outside hotel rooms) for the first time since the joint venture with Gontha's Malicak went belly up at the end of 1998.

Indonesia's largest cable system, KabelVision, meanwhile, will attempt to raise US\$1.7 million through an IPO on the Jakarta Stock Exchange in April — the first TV operator to list on the domestic bourse. The platform wants to build its network beyond Jakarta. Another force driving the IPO is KabelVision shareholder, the Lippo Group, which wants to use KabelVision as a technology flagship. KabelVision predicts 30,000 subscribers by year end and 60,000 next year. It has also teamed up with dominant telco Indosat's PT IndosatNet to offer high-speed Internet services. Lippo claims it will spend US\$400 million in three years and aims to have two million cable and Internet subscribers by 2002.



Government building, Bangalore

JAPAN

IN THE merger of the month, DirecTV finally becomes part of SkyPerfectTV. (See page 18).

Sports broadcasting hit headlines when Itochu takes a one-time loss of US\$67 million on satellite subsidiary, Japan Sports Channel, which is 20 percent owned by ESPN, and transfer management to new company, Sport i Network. The channel, i-ESPN, has two million cable and 600,000 satellite households. Samurai fans, meanwhile, are keeping TV bosses in subs dollars. The country's most expensive channel at US\$23 a month, Samurai TV passes the 60,000 mark.

PHILIPPINES

SKYCABLE launches its new ZPDee cable modem service (See page 37), which is about the most action the market has seen lately.

In the long-running piracy saga, HBO Asia takes a few steps forward, claiming to be shutting off pirate signals. No proof is produced, so it all seems like just another of those empty threats — much like the Philippines' cable bill really, which is still hovering unpassed. The National Telecommunications Commission, supposedly 100 percent behind the piracy move, also declines to name names. Meanwhile, pirate boxes are a breeze to get hold of. US\$1,500 is all it takes.

SINGAPORE

MAJOR changes expected in the structure of Singapore's one-party-show media environment when the government says it is considering an end to the state-run TV monopoly. The idea is part of prime

minister Goh Chok Tong's renaissance ideals for the island-state. Information and arts minister, Lee Yock Suan, is quoted as saying the aim is to create a "functional and competitive media industry".

Singapore's dedicated news service, Channel NewsAsia, celebrates its first birthday and says it will roll out across the region from September. This is the first move of a US\$100-US\$150 million five-year expansion programme. No distribution deals have been signed so far.

SOUTH KOREA

SOUTH Koreans are clearly less impressed with North Korean programming than the dear revered Northern leaders would like. South Korea's Ministry of Unification insists only 142 people have watched North Korean satellite shows since the ban was lifted last October. The report says five people a day watched in the first month. This has dropped to two a day — one viewer from the government and one from the broadcasting industry.

A much more enthusiastic response greets the government's announcement of a new digital satellite service in July 2001. Operators are expected to be selected in July, with a trial platform by early 2001.

TAIWAN

LOVE is in the air at the Piao Wang Technology online broadcasting joint venture between Koo's group's Internet service provider, Hoshin Giga-media, and China Television Media Group. The first project is an interactive dating service, Asia4love.com.

To counter what they see as mainland China's global TV influence, TV authorities

launch a new satellite channel, MSTV, in March. The channel is being backed by China Television Co, Chunghua Telecommunications Corp and the Overseas Chinese Affairs Commission, according to the Central News Agency.

In another proactive move, the Executive Yuan will allow telecoms services by broadcast operators. The move excludes foreign-owned broadcasters. US-based Carlyle Group is unperturbed, and continues, with a reported US\$16 million purse, shopping for independent cable operators.

THAILAND

SOLE pay-TV supplier, UBC, announces a Bht2.17 billion (US\$58.4 million) loss for last year compared with US\$3.09 billion (US\$83.1 million) in 1998. The company has about 305,000 subscribers. In Bangkok, local lobby groups are stirring up the monopoly pot yet again, saying that UBC is abusing its position. Anti-trust police have been called in to look at the alleged "monopolistic practice and possible abuse of consumer rights". Talk is that UBC may lower its rates, but not until it's sure this will boost volume. A call has also gone out for UBC to unbundle its programming package, and to launch cheaper packages than the current one at US\$32.

MIH Limited, a major shareholder in UBC, is looking beyond the TV venture and has launched the hot new WAP (Wireless Application Protocol) platform. MIH's MWeb is Thailand's first Internet company to offer Internet services to mobile phone users using the new platform. The mobile phone market in Thailand is larger than the PC market. CSA



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TV5

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Austar United Communications has appointed **Bruce Mann**, former executive director of marketing and programming, as managing director, Austar Entertainment. Mann will oversee the retailing and distribution of Austar products, including broadband Internet, pay-TV and telephony.

Fong Chin Chong has been appointed managing director of Star TV's STARTV.COM Limited. The new company will explore online business opportunities. Chong was previously Star TV's information systems vice president.

Paul Fletcher has left his position as senior policy adviser to Australia's minister for communications to join Foxtel as director of business development.

Loral Skynet has appointed **Timothy O'Shea** as Asia-Pacific executive director, sales, with responsibility for selling the satellite services offered by the Loral Global Alliance. O'Shea will be based in Singapore.

Foxtel has appointed **Ross Crowley**, assistant director of programming, as head of acquisitions with responsibility for production and purchase of programmes for Fox 8, FX and Fox Kids channels.

HBO Asia has announced a slew of promotions in its Singapore headquarters. **Suarina Chua** has been made senior director, affiliate sales. Chua has been with the network since 1994. **Karen Ng**, with the channel since 1992, has been promoted to senior director, on-air promotion and production. Also with the channel since its inception, **Quek Toi Mien** is now senior director, programming.

Rohit Adya replaces **S.B. Gurudutt** as CEO of UTV's Tamil-language channel, Vijay TV. Adya was formerly general manager of the Times of India group in Chennai.

The Discovery Networks Asia's **Lesley Campbell** has been promoted to vice president of marketing and communications from her previous post as director. Marketing and communications senior manager, **Anya McDonald**, has been promoted to director, marketing and communications, for Discovery Networks Asia. Both are based in Singapore.



Joan Li has been promoted to director of marketing for Turner Entertainment Networks Asia Inc. Li will oversee trade and consumer marketing for Cartoon Network in Taiwan. In Sydney, **Kathleen Alexander** has been promoted to marketing director with responsibility for Australia and New Zealand.

Turner Entertainment Networks Asia Inc has promoted **Thomas Lam** to director of broadcast operations. Previously engineering manager, Lam will oversee on air presentation operations and assist in developing strategic business plans for new technology, facilities and equipment.

Gregory Ang has been promoted to director of advertising sales for Discovery Networks Asia. Based in Singapore, Ang's new responsibilities include managing the Singapore sales team and selling commercial air-time in Asia for Discovery Channel and Animal Planet. Ang has been with the network since 1998.

Junta Fujikawa, DirecTV Japan's vice president in charge of planning, has resigned and returned to Mitsubishi Corporation, from where he was seconded. The move coincides with the merger of Japan's two satellite platforms, DirecTV Japan and SkyPerfecTV.

Ian Fairweather has left his position as acting chief executive of Australian pay-TV programming company, XYZ Entertainment, to become general manager for Nickelodeon Australia.

Andrew Stevens is the new anchor of CNN's *Asia Business Morning*. Stevens has been a correspondent for the programme since May 1999, when he joined the network from CNBC Asia. Stevens replaces Farland Chang, who has gone back to Los Angeles.

Sri Adhikari Brothers Television Network has appointed **Rakesh Sapru** as chief executive officer. Sapru was formerly business development vice president for GE Capital and, briefly, CEO of IGE India. Other appointments at Adhikari Brothers include Sony Entertainment Television's assistant vice president, **Ambica Kuthiala**, as senior vice president, programming and production; and **Leena Sharma** as vice president, distribution networking and corporate communications. Sharma was earlier with Zee Telefilms and served as general manager of SitiCable.

Sharon Tan is MTV Networks Asia's new vice president for communications. Based in Singapore, she replaces **Marina Leung**. No reasons were given for Leung's sudden departure earlier this year. Tan previously worked for Levi's, DuPont and Ogilvy & Mather.

Veteran industry communications director, **Georgette Tan**, has left business network, CNBC Asia, to join MasterCard in Singapore. 

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Bankers, brokers and lawyers may be obsessed with details of the deals being rolled out by Richard Li's Pacific Century CyberWorks. In the television trenches, however, everyone is just as interested to see how Rupert Murdoch reacts to his new partner in Hong Kong. By Janine Stein

century CITY

BY THE time Rupert Murdoch landed in Hong Kong in early March, the younger generation — Murdoch's son James and Pacific Century CyberWorks (PCCW) chairman and Star TV founder Richard Li — had already drunk tea together.

"Murdoch [the elder] and Li didn't even meet," some insiders say. Others say they did, indeed, meet — briefly. Just a few more snippets of information added to the saga that erupted mid-February when Li, younger son of Hong Kong's mega-wealthy Li Ka-shing, first started bidding for control of Hong Kong's dominant telecommunications company, Cable & Wireless HKT.

At stake now, following Li's successful bid, is the future of the broadband pay-TV-Internet joint venture between Star TV, which Murdoch bought from Li in 1993 and 1995 for US\$871 million, and HKT. The venture, signed at the end of 1999 and valued between US\$2 billion and US\$12 billion, heralded a new era for Hong Kong interactive television and promised a raft of firsts for broadband entertainment in Asia, if not the world.

When the deal was announced in November at a hastily arranged press conference, kept secret until the last minute to comply with Hong Kong Stock Exchange regulations, Cable & Wireless Plc of the UK was already in advanced negotiations with Singapore's government-controlled Singapore Telecom to sell C&W's 54 percent stake in HKT. But the joint venture agreement, the parties agreed, would go ahead regardless of any changes in ownership on HKT's side.

Who could have guessed that the wild card would have Richard Li's face on it? On February 29, two weeks after Li launched his furious bid for control of HKT, it was all over.

HKT, which had communications posts in China as far back as last century, was now owned by a 10-month old Internet start-up (commonly described as "preco-

with a new economy buzzcut, an old-economy private jet and a reputation for making women cry.

If the HKT acquisition goes through, Li told a press conference a few days after his HKT success, PCCW will be worth around US\$70 billion. Li will also have control of an ADSL network, HKT's three million telephone lines in Hong Kong as well as its 700,000 Internet subscribers.

Despite the AOL-Time Warner merger, which had softened up the market for incredulous take-overs, Li's *chutzpah* in going up against the powerful Singapore Telecom for control of the even more powerful HKT made the market gasp. How?, everyone asked, watching the funding miracle unfold.

Li, who offered around US\$39 billion (about US\$11 million of it in cash and the rest in PCCW shares) for the stake, had come up with the sweeter offer, C&W executives in London insisted.

"Who, us?" exclaimed wide-eyed officials in Hong Kong and Beijing, insisting that they had absolutely nothing to do with Li's spectacular fund-raising feat or C&W's decision to accept his offer over the rock-solid stability of Singapore Telecom's.

Murdoch's tactical error — and one of the reasons for so much speculation over the Star TV-HKT joint venture — was in backing the Singapore Telecom bid with an 11th hour US\$1 billion.

Having spent so much time and effort making amends for his 1993 anti-totalitarian regimes *faux pas*, there was some surprise at the move, primarily for its potential to annoy the authorities up north

and undo years of carefully nurtured relationships in China.

Few believe the claims that Beijing was not consulted at every step of C&W's way out of its stake. On the other hand, there



were some who say that Beijing's position on Singapore Telecom was neutral, and its hand was tipped only with the entry into the race of the younger Li, whose father is impeccably connected in China.

Beijing's interference, if there was any, was a lot quieter than Hong Kong's raucous outcry over the possibility of a Singapore-controlled telecommunications environment, much less by a company owned by the Singapore government. Of all the countries in Asia, Singapore is Hong Kong's fiercest rival for regional telecommunications hub status, and the spectre of a Singaporean company in such a powerful position was simply too

much for Hong Kong's Singapore-phobic population. That C&W HKT has for the past 16 years been controlled by a UK company was not mentioned in the nationalistic stirrings that accompanied Li's much-publicised bid.

One local radio commentator, Albert Cheng, said the HKT-Singapore Telecom merger was like "sleeping with the enemy", and called upon local companies to rise up against the Singapore spectre. Callers responded, painting Li as a hero riding in to save Hong Kong's honour.

Murdoch's position on Singapore Telecom's side was announced on February 28. About 12 hours later, news of Li's successful offer for the C&W stake started leaking out and News Corp pulled its money off the Singapore Telecom table, maintaining that a "strategic alliance" was still in place to develop the Asian telecommunications business.

A few hours later, in the highest-action Tuesday morning in Asia's TV-history, News Corp's top man in Asia, Gareth Chang, resigned "to pursue other interests"; Murdoch's commitment to China was being questioned because of what



There are no enemies forever in the commercial world

Richard Li



most saw as his support for Singapore over Hong Kong; and the Star TV-HKT joint venture looked like it was toast.

Not so fast, Richard Li said, while insiders began whispering about Li's ambitions to take up the HKT seat on the Star TV board that apparently came with the joint venture. "I'm keeping an open mind," Li insisted.

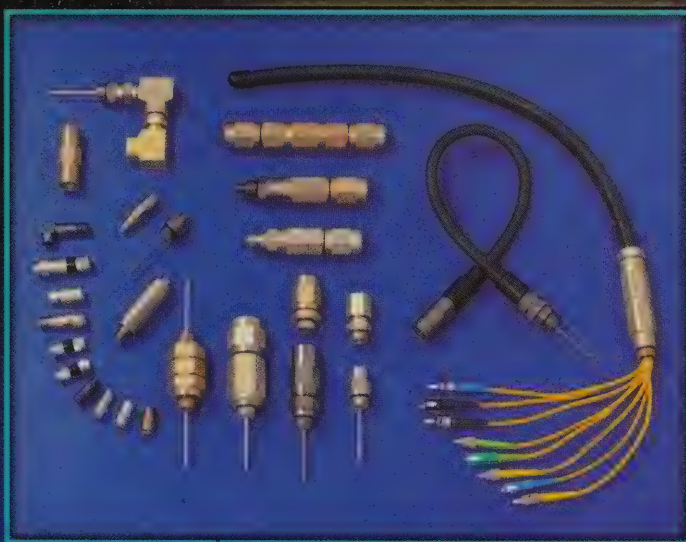
Only days after his offer was accepted and C&W appointed a special group to

examine the final agreement, Li said he hadn't "looked in any detail" at the Star TV joint venture. "There are two options," he ventured. "Either we can go ahead, or we can disband." As for ongoing animosity about Murdoch's support for Singapore Telecom, Li said: "I've already forgotten about that". And, he added, "there are no enemies forever in the commercial world".

Although Murdoch was quoted in the UK's *Financial Times* as saying he did not have high expectations for an ongoing relationship with Li, the Murdoch camp was making conciliatory noises of its own. There was even talk that Singapore Telecom would be invited to participate in a possible PCCW alliance to develop interactive services for Asia.

As proof of its commitment to the joint venture, Star TV formally announced the appointment of Foxtel chief executive officer, Tom Mockridge, to head the project, provisionally called DTV. Hopes are that DTV will still be able to launch by year end, but if the government doesn't hurry up with licences, 2001 may be a more realistic target.

Meanwhile, members of an advance



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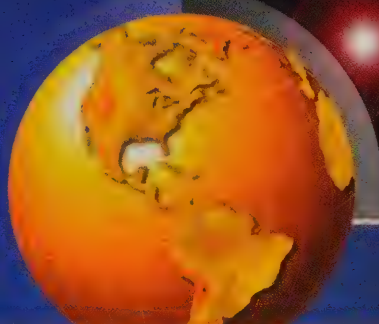
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Connecting The World

task force have been dashing between Star TV in Hung Hom and HKT in Quarry Bay trying to get DTV operational and programming details in place. That they need a leader is abundantly clear to those with whom programmers of the advance guard have started talking.

One of the biggest questions is who stands to gain what from the alliance?

General opinion is that both of them will benefit, if only because one powerful player against incumbent i-Cable for the pay-TV hearts and eyes of Hong Kong's six million people and 1.9 million households stands a much better chance than two.

Broadly, HKT (which will be renamed PCCW-HKT as soon as the dust clears) has the broadband infrastructure into 80 percent of Hong Kong's households and Star TV has both its own TV content and access to more through the News Corp connection. Although there is no question that Star TV has access to a wide range of television channels and digital satellite know-how, it's not quite clear what they have that's Web-appropriate.

PCCW, meanwhile, is talking about a team of 700 people working on English-language Web content development as part of its alliance with Trans-World International (TWI) in the UK.

The English-language component of his business does not appear to worry anyone. This is making the folks at Star TV grin for the echoes it has of the satellite TV service they built up from Li's original pan-Asian Star TV platform. Seven years and millions of dollars later, Star TV is still not making money, although it is said to be close. Li's pan-Asian idea, meanwhile, has gone down as one of the region's great television follies and the English-language component is a dwindling force in an increasingly localised satellite TV bouquet.

Another frequently asked question is: What happens if the joint venture falls apart?

There is little doubt in any quarter that Star TV will press ahead with DTV, which offers the most impressive interactive package in Asia at the moment. PCCW, which hasn't demonstrated its service yet, is also highly unlikely to abandon its Network of the World (NOW) platform, which it plans to roll out across Asia. Li says NOW will be the world's first fully converged service providing interactive digital video and Web access.

Even if they think that 1.9 million households makes a market for three pay-TV platforms — NOW, DTV and the incum-

bent Cable TV — as competitors for broadband audiences, PCCW and Star TV are likely to find Hong Kong unconvinced that broadband services are a must-have. So far, HKT's broadband iTV service has less than 90,000 subscribers, which could indicate two things: Hong Kongers don't care about video-on-demand in general, or that iTV's service was simply not compelling enough.

If the Hong Kong scenario looms larger than it should at the moment, it's probably because of all the headline-friendly high-drama that accompanied the HKT sale. There is also the notion, which would have been preposterous a year ago even, that a 10-month old company can sweep in, push the venerated Singapore Telecom-News Corp alliance off the table, and convince the suits at C&W that it should have the prize.

But the soap opera angles of the Hong Kong tale do not mask a bigger reality — both News Corp and PCCW are involved in fast track deal-a-minute scenarios in a bid to be major players in a new economy that stretches well beyond Star TV. While the HKT bid secured Li's position, Murdoch has yet to unveil a firm strategy for repositioning his old media News Corp as a new media force.

While James meets Richard, Rupert is courting yet another young thing, also less than half his age. This time it's 31-year-old billionaire Jerry Yang, who co-founded Yahoo! Yahoo!'s estimated worth is US\$90 billion. While no deals have been announced, the pair are thought to be talking about carrying News Corp content on Yahoo sites. News Corp would, in turn, provide satellite access to Yahoo!'s sites, and they would swap company stakes. Yahoo! has its own Hong Kong portal, with lots of local flavour. Quite how the Star TV-HKT joint venture would fit into a News Corp-Yahoo marriage is unclear. What is apparent is that any alliance would provide powerful competition for PCCW's NOW.

Li, meanwhile, needs the creature comforts reportedly installed in his personal jet as he gallops around in the hunt for bits, and pieces of the hottest companies around.

His best smelling global deal to date is the US\$10 million cash purchase of a 12.5 percent stake in the US-based digital scent technology company, DigiScents.

He has also done a deal with China's leading PC manufacturer, Legend, which commands 27 percent of China's PC market. "It's another step to become the world's largest broadband Internet business," Li said.

Legend, in turn, has a deal with the News Corp-owned NDS to develop Legend-branded set-top boxes for digital platforms in mainland China. Li doesn't have huge faith in the set-top box rollout, perhaps because it is aimed at China's new digital cable market and Li hasn't yet



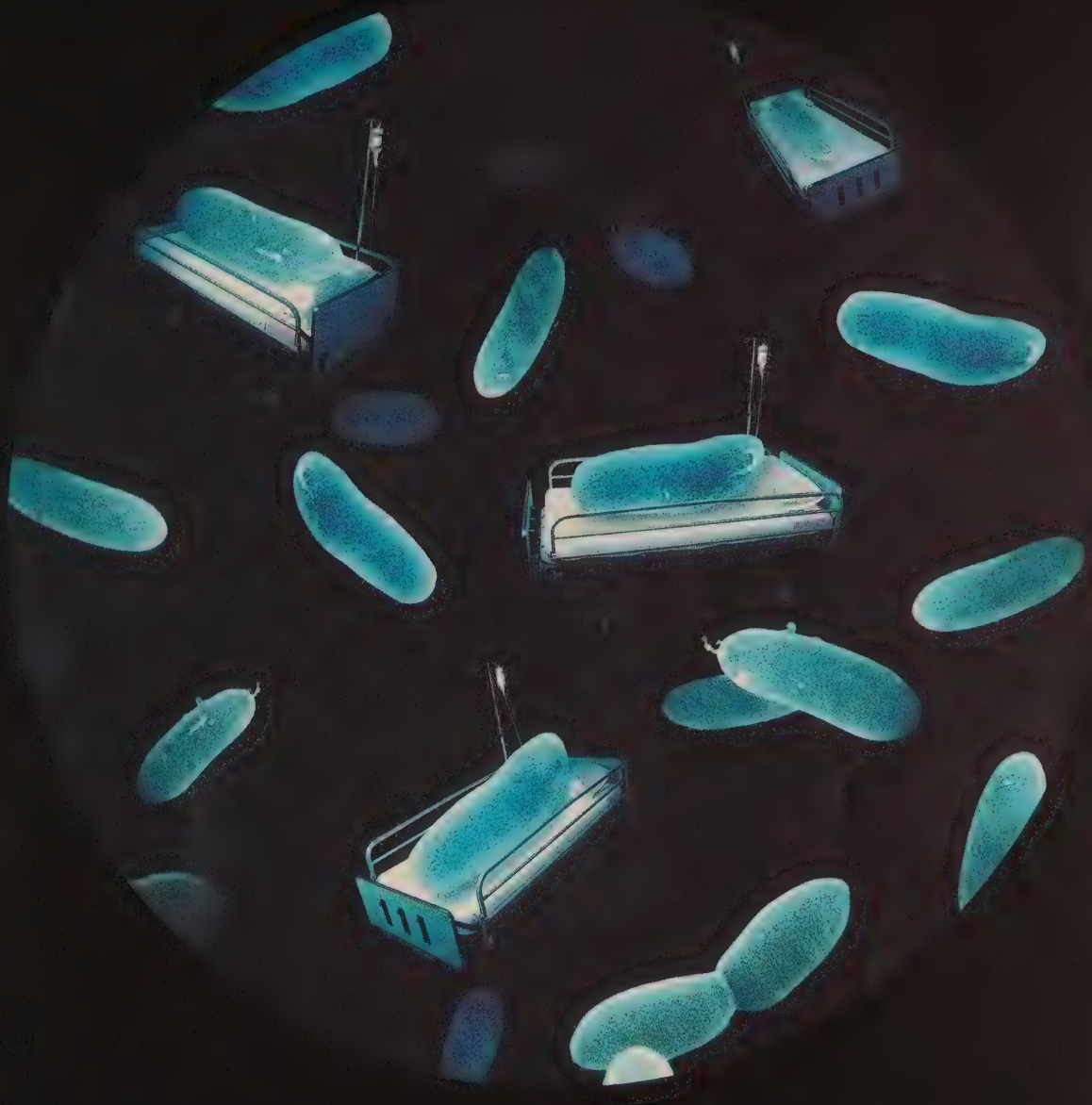
rupert murdoch

said how he is going to navigate that particular regulatory minefield.

He's insisting that PCs are the way to go. "I don't see set-tops raging forward this year or next — not here [Hong Kong] and not there [China]," he said, citing multiple standards as the obstacle. "Right now the prevailing technology is the PC. It has the highest processing power and the lowest cost."

In a classic play-out of the "friends in one place, foes in the next" environment, what could easily happen is that the Star TV-HKT venture could live in Hong Kong only, while News Corp/Star TV would compete in other centres.

As for the rest of the region, well, anything could happen... and if events of the past few months are anything to go by, they probably will. CS9



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WHEN, at some point in the future, Asia tunes into, say, a cooking show on Richard Li's Network of the World (NOW), scents of melting chocolate or roasted chestnuts or even chicken curry will waft across the room, courtesy of one of the slew of deals Li's Pacific Century CyberWorks (PCCW) has inked in the last few months.

Unlike some of the tricks the youngest Li has pulled off recently, the magic this time is wrought by a US-based technology company, DigiScents Inc.

The company launched in February 1999, and has since overcome various levels of derision. Smelling a hoax at the first whiff of DigiScents' Smellelevision, technology pundits laughed and dismissed this latest effort at olfactory creativity as a fantasy.

A year later, Digital Scent Technology is the next big thing. And DigiScents claims to be leading the way with its pioneering "scentography", helped in its vision of scent-enhanced Web surfing with US\$10 million of PCCW's money.

The deal, which gives PCCW a 12.5 percent stake in the company, came shortly after DigiScents signed an agreement with streaming video delivery platform, RealNetworks, bringing ScentStream software to 80 million RealPlayer users worldwide. The company was also treated to a coveted, reputation-boosting scratch-'n'-sniff cover story in the November 1999 issue of online culture magazine, *Wired*. The magazine tested the software and gave it a nod of approval, stating that the technology could launch the next Web revolution.

As the Web world begins to realise DigiScents is legitimate, interest in the company has soared. Its Web site (www.digiscents.com) has received more than 500,000 hits since launch in November. And this, says CEO and co-founder, Joel Bellenson, without any effort to drive traffic to the site.

The potential is huge for companies across the board. Test a perfume, sample a candle, smell the beast coming at you in a video-game, experience the odours of a potential travel destination, all before you buy. "SmellTracks" will be worked into films, and "Smell Signatures" will be attached to branded products. The "Scent Registry", an index of scents, will be licensed to software developers.

The company's greatest concern is its ability to fulfil what Bellenson predicts will

Your screen,
too, will one day
be able to smell.
Mansha Daswani
looks at a company
with its nostrils
over Asia

nose CONTROL



joel bellenson

be "the extreme demand". Financials have not been disclosed, but aggressive growth is being plotted.

The first product in the DigiScents range, a ScentWare Developer's Kit (SDK), was launched mid-March at the Video Game Developer's Conference in California. To come this summer is the Snortal (www.snortal.com), which aims, among other uses, to be "a business-to-business Nexus and a nurturing place for budding Scentographers as well as a community for those scent enthusiasts". The site will be a mixture of free- and pay-services, including "ScentMail" — smelly e-mail.

DigiScents' technology is based on the iSmell, the "personal scent synthesiser". The box, attached to users' computers and containing a palette of 128 oils, will provide the scent. The ScentStream software, meanwhile, will mix the scented oils for the desired fragrance.

The box, which can be turned on and off, will be sold for less than US\$200; replacement cartridges cost about US\$50. The iSmell will be sold at the Snortal later this year.

If the idea sounds gimmicky, the tech-

nology is rooted in science, Bellenson says. He argues that the reason many thought it couldn't be done is because it requires "high-powered biochemistry and software".

Bellenson and co-founder Dexter Smith are no strangers to pushing the scientific envelope. Founders of biotechnology firm, Pangea Systems, the duo's other activity is creating genetic databases for pharmaceutical companies.

DigiScents promises a huge range of scents, but it issues a disclaimer: the odours won't be identical to the real thing. "Just like a painter represents a scene by mixing and applying paints to a canvas, we can also mix and apply scents. Each new iteration of the digital scent software and devices will bring increasing levels of fidelity, as has been the case with audio and video technology," Bellenson says.

Like any other new invention, the software, in dangerous hands, may not smell like roses. Imagine stink-bomb viruses and rotten-egg e-mails. Bellenson is however, content just to see the potential of the software, saying: "Digitisation gives humanity the ability to creatively control and transform our world." 



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dial for M merger

Few were surprised when Japan's two platforms — SkyPerfectTV and DirecTV — said they would be one. Mark Schilling looks at what went wrong, why and the role of a soccer ball in the downfall of a platform

SOMETIMES the conventional wisdom gets it right. Just as the pundits were boringly correct in predicting, months before John McCain was even a gleam in the media's eye, that Al Gore would end up facing George W. Bush in the US presidential election, Japanese satellite industry insiders were right in forecasting, from almost the beginning of their contest, the defeat of DirecTV Japan and the triumph of rival platform SkyPerfectTV.

Early in March, Japan Digital Broadcasting Services, which operates SkyPerfectTV, and DirecTV Japan formally announced that the two platforms would be one. DirecTV agreed to transfer all its subscribers to SkyPerfectTV by December and cease independent operations.

Six DirecTV shareholders, led by US DirecTV parent Hughes Electronics, will take a collective 10.2 percent share in the merged company. Hughes will seat one director on its board, but the top shareholder group will continue to be Sony, Fuji TV, Itochu, Softbank and News Corp, each of which owns an 11.375 percent share in

SkyPerfectTV.

At the end of March, SkyPerfectTV will issue ¥9 billion (US\$84.6 million) in new shares that Hughes and other DirecTV shareholders will purchase. The merged company will have a total capitalisation of ¥89.1 billion (US\$837.5 million).

By year end, DirecTV subscribers will receive free SkyPerfectTV tuners and migrate to the new platform. The merger will mark the end of not only DirecTV's corporate existence in Japan, but the only strong foreign presence in the Japanese satellite business.

WHAT went so wrong? Firstly, DirecTV was forced to play catch-up right from the very beginning. When it started broadcasting in December 1997, its then leading competitor, PerfectTV, had already been on air for 13 months and was almost at the 500,000 subscriber mark. For all its efforts to narrow the gap, including a cash-back campaign that, in the autumn of 1999, offered new subscribers what were essentially free sign-ups, DirecTV found itself falling ever further behind. By the time the merger was agreed, the ailing platform had only 400,000 subscribers compared to nearly 1.7 million for SkyPerfectTV.

Second, instead of the three-way contest it initially envisioned, DirecTV found itself in a two-way race with a rival backed by some of the biggest names in

the Japanese media business. JSkyB, a platform owned by Rupert Murdoch's News Corp, Fuji TV, Softbank and Sony, merged with PerfectTV in May 1998, before it even began broadcasting. The merger created a powerhouse whose lineup of more than 150 TV channels, compared with only 88 for DirecTV, persuaded new subscribers to sign on at nearly double the rate recorded by predecessor PerfectTV. By the end of its first month of operation, SkyPerfectTV had 700,000 subscribers, to only 100,000 for DirecTV.

Also, DirecTV was never able to realise the vision of its first president, Muneaki Masuda, who had persuaded DirecTV parent, Hughes, to launch the company in 1995. The founder and president of Culture Convenience Club (CCC), whose Tsutaya chain of rental video stores was Japan's largest, Masuda hoped to bring the 10 million Tsutaya members into the DirecTV fold. But his efforts to promote the platform fell far short of his promises. One problem: CCC directly managed only 30 of its approximately 850 stores and could not persuade most of its franchisees to make more than token attempts to push DirecTV subscriptions.

Masuda also had a rocky relationship with Gareth Chang, the DirecTV chairman who had been seconded to the platform by Hughes. A flamboyantly aggressive entrepreneur who had built CCC from scratch into a category killer, Masuda was





scenes from directv japan programming

used to having his own way, while the Chinese-born Chang, a naturalised US citizen who made his name in the rough-and-tumble business of aircraft sales, resented Masuda's attempts to dominate the platform's management.

Chang, however, was unable to turn DirecTV's dismal subscription numbers around and, in August 1998, was replaced by Larry Hunter, senior vice president of business affairs and general counsel of DirecTV Inc and DirecTV International and assistant general counsel of Hughes Electronics. [Chang's subsequent career at News Corp in Hong Kong lasted for about 18 months before he "resigned to pursue

other interests"].

Hunter, in turn, took over Masuda's post of president in November, effectively ousting him from a management role. The shocked Masuda at first announced that he would remain on as vice president, but finally left the company, taking his seconded staff with him and reducing CCC's shareholdings to a third of its original 31.82 percent stake. Hughes then increased its share to 43.3 percent.

All this turmoil at the top did not inspire confidence among DirecTV's other corporate shareholders, including Matsushita Electric, Mitsubishi Corporation, Mitsubishi Electric, Dai Nippon Printing, Space Communication Corporation and Tokuma Shoten Publishing. Also, as losses mounted and subscriptions lagged, the shareholders began to see the light at the end of tunnel grow increasingly dim.

DirecTV was trying to differentiate itself from its larger rival with interactive technology developed by DirecTV in the US and innovative programming sources in Japan, including a live concert by local megastar, Hikaru Utada.

But SkyPerfecTV was more than keeping pace. Though it had its share of misses, including a rash of embarrassing channel failures, they were more than outweighed by the hits, including the purchase of satellite broadcasting rights, in the summer of 1999, to Italian Serie A soccer games. Hugely popular in Japan because of the presence of Japanese stars, Hidetoshi Nakata and Kiyoshi Nanami, on Serie A teams, the games proved to be the killer content SkyPerfecTV needed to sign up thousands of subscribers — and put even more distance between it and its faltering rival.

In October 1999, Hughes was reported to be ready to spend around US\$300 million to buy more time for DirecTV, which had already run through its US\$620.4 million capitalisation and needed a large cash infusion to keep going for another year.

Other shareholders were reluctant to buy the DirecTV bonds on offer, not only because they didn't want to throw good money after bad, but because their loyalties were now divided. Matsushita was making hardware for both SkyPerfecTV and DirecTV subscribers, while other shareholders, including content provider Tokuma, were looking ahead at opportunities presented by the digital BS services scheduled to begin broadcasting in December 2001.

Meanwhile, DirecTV was staking its

shaky corporate future on a transfer in 2001 of all its channels to a new communications satellite at 110° E. The switch would allow subscribers to use the same tuner and antenna sets to view the broadcasts of both DirecTV and the digital BS services, which would also be broadcasting from the 110 orbital slot. But then SkyPerfecTV announced that it was considering migrating some of its channels to 110 as well — giving new subscribers less of a reason to opt for DirecTV.

In the end, Hughes decided not to buy the bonds — and began negotiating a merger with SkyPerfecTV.

SkyPerfecTV president, Hajime Unoki, at first brusquely rejected the merger proposal, saying that SkyPerfecTV wanted neither DirecTV's subscribers nor its infrastructure, including its broadcasting centre in Ibaragi Prefecture. Later, however, he relented, agreeing to a face-saving settlement that allowed Hughes at least the appearance of a merger and a presence, however shadowy in the Japanese satellite platform business.

WHAT, if any, are the lessons? The first, perhaps, is the difficulty of making it in the brutally tough Japanese broadcasting market without a strong Japanese partner. CCC, a novice in the market itself, simply couldn't cut it, while the shareholder list of SkyPerfecTV read like a Who's Who of the Japanese media industry.

Second is the advantage of being the first with the most. SkyPerfecTV's scatter-shot approach of throwing hundreds of channels at subscribers and seeing which ones would stick resulted in more flops than DirecTV's more rational strategy, but the platform also had the entire market to itself for more than a year — long enough to make its name mean "communications satellite TV" in the minds of many consumers. It didn't hurt that the media later reduced "SkyPerfecTV" to the catchy-sounding (in Japanese) Sukapa.

DirecTV, on the other hand, insisted on a Japanised version of its English name, which many Japanese had trouble getting their tongues around.

Last, but hardly least, is the importance of content. DirecTV arguably offered a clearer, more reliable picture, but SkyPerfecTV had Hidetoshi Nakata kicking a soccer ball. And that, to the thousands of fans who ponied up the subscription fee to a SkyPerfecTV sports package, was all that mattered. 





girl guides

Frocks, friends and frying plans give a girlie gloss to She TV. But, as Nancy Lee tells Janine Stein, the Japan-based women's channel has a lot more than lipstick colours on its agenda at the moment

DEDICATED women's channels, says Nancy Lee, "are about gender not genre". As such, says the president of Japan's She TV, "you are dealing with 180 degrees of possibilities... It's all about finding a happy medium, which is very important and very difficult. We try to get cable operators to understand that no one woman will like everything, but we want every woman to like something".

She TV, launched in March 1998 as "the first international network for women" and billed as "the mirror that reflects her world", is a 24-hour entertainment and information channel targeting women between 18 and 34 years old.

The three partners — Lee, chairman and founder Andrew Tow, and executive producer Tom Tercek — virtually emptied their bank accounts to come up with the start-up capital. The rest of the funding — some US\$20 million — has come primarily from Wall Street.

Programming includes fashion, food and wine, family and parenting, health and fitness, entertainment, careers and travel. Most of the content is acquired, with short-form shows giving the line-up its local gloss. About 20 percent of the content is from Japan. Among other supply agreements, the channel has a deal with the Lifetime network in the United States that includes *Intimate Portraits*, a series of up-close profiles of global icons.

She TV is divided into day parts, targeting housewives and parents from

6am to noon, housewives and students from noon to 6pm and working women and students from 6pm to 11pm.

Lee says "emotional involvement" is one of the keys to attracting women audiences. Another is trust. "This is what we are striving for." A few years ago, she adds, one of the Japanese terrestrial networks created a women's show called *Handsome Women*, "which was really a show for men to watch women... that's betraying".

"The shows that do best in Japan," Lee says, "are the ones that we have repackaged with Japanese hosts, even if the issues are not Japanese... It's all about building a community," she adds. "We may acquire the majority of the programming, but there are so many things that we can do to make people feel a part of this."

Lee admits that filling airtime with relevant programming is a challenge. Parenting, for instance, isn't a hot topic among hip and happening producers. And Lee says, "kids don't come with instruction booklets [which creates an educational gap among parents]... right now we are having a really hard time finding programming about raising children... so we are going to our viewers to ask them to send in their videos about raising kids." The show is scheduled for a June launch.

For the moment, She TV is available in more than one million households in Japan through 35 cable systems and as a basic channel on DirecTV Japan. But regional noises are being made, particularly with the frantic content hunt in the run-up to the launch of digital platforms such as Star TV's new DTV venture for Hong Kong. Lee says Hong Kong, India and the Philippines are the pay-TV markets that have been most enthusiastic. The She TV service is currently uplinked from Los Angeles, with tentative plans being made to transfer facilities to Asia.

Attempting to keep up with the high-frenzy Internet rush, She TV is launching shetv.com in May in Japanese, with an English site to follow.

She TV has a dual revenue stream — advertising and subscription fees — and has plans to develop an e-commerce platform. Advertisers include Max Factor, SK-II, Vidal Sassoon, Goldman Sachs and P&G.

"At the moment we are most interested in people supporting us," Lee says. "More than anything, what we need right now is for companies to say 'we love your concept'." 



nancy/lee



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Humphrey Bogart

James Cagney



Peter Mukherjea is an old hand at Star TV politics. He joined Star TV in July 1993, at around the same time that Rupert Murdoch agreed to buy the platform from Richard Li in two parts for US\$871 million. His first job in the organisation was as India sales director in Hong Kong, and he was moved to India shortly after that to start up Star TV's advertising sales business. In January 1996, the Middle East was added to his portfolio and, a year later, he was appointed executive vice president.

In February this year, after former Star TV India great hope, Rathikant Basu, was eased out, Mukherjea was promoted to chief executive officer and given overall responsibility for News Television India's entertainment television business. This includes Star-branded channels — Star Plus, Star Movies, Star News, Channel [V], Star World — and National Geographic.

He has not only captured the attention of the News Corp powers that be. Last year, Mukherjea was voted Indian Elle magazine's most stylish professional, and described as "a consummate pro in a mercurial business".

Having shed all kinds of troublesome and expensive entanglements in India, News Corp has a whole new plan for the subcontinent, including doubling investment year-on-year for the next five years. Girish Garkal spoke to Star TV India CEO, Peter Mukherjea, about doubling Star TV's US\$18 million annual subscription revenue by 2001, about working with rivals Zee TV and Sony on joint distribution, about Hindi-language programming, his relationship with former Star India boss Rathikant Basu, and why the Indian Broadcast Federation in its current form will never work

star alliance

NEWSCORP clearly has ambitious Star TV growth plans for India and the subcontinent, including an initial public offering (IPO) within a year, investments of up to US\$100 million in Internet businesses, and boosting its programming strength with the launch of at least three new satellite channels soon — a 24-hour health channel, Fox Kids channel and a 24-hour Hindi-language movie channel. The man charged with heading it all is Star TV stalwart, Peter Mukherjea, who says the platform has everything it needs except local content. But, he adds, he plans to make up for lost ground with no further delay.

We didn't get out of the tangle with Zee to watch others take over the turf

What is your agenda for Star TV?

We have shifted almost 100 percent into Hindi on the main entertainment channel, Star Plus. It is going to be a fight with both Sony and Zee. Viewers want fresh and new programmes, and good content is all that matters.

Our marketing drive is going to stress that we are both Indian and we are new and fresh. We are becoming more focused on the other channels too. From July, there will be no 7pm and 9pm news bulletins on Star Plus. News will be only on the Star News channel.

The second task is to get a larger slice of the cable subscription market. Today, we are the largest collectors of pay revenue in India at US\$18 million annually. We expect to double that figure in the next year but that is not enough. The cable subscription market is worth US\$700 million.

To expand the pay market, we are investing in set-top boxes. They will be distributed free or on a deferred payment basis. But the main agenda will have to be joint distribution of encrypted channels with both Zee and Sony. Both are keen to do it. Their airtime for ads is full and the

only way they can now increase revenue is to go on hiking rates. Somewhere they will hit the DD level. Ad revenue for them is already plateauing out. But the question now is, who will cast the first stone?

Do you expect to take a lead in all this?

We have the biggest bouquet of channels by far in the cable market. We certainly see ourselves as leaders both in the area of channel strength and relationships.

Why did you get out of direct-to-home (DTH) just when the picture was warming up?

It is still not clear which way DTH will go or whether Doordarshan will have a monopoly over it. Besides, we figure cable is the way in India. DTH may not make too much of a dent.

How important is India to News Corp and Rupert Murdoch?

We have not got out of the Zee tangle merely to watch others take over the turf. We have the brand, the relationships and the experience. What we lack is the local content...

Investments in India, currently at around US\$20 million, are going to double year on year till they hit US\$100 million annually. Our IPO is going to be out within a year, and we are going to be heavily investing in Internet businesses. An important area will be opening a chain of cyber cafes to increase Internet connectivity in India. We expect to invest anything between US\$50-100 million in this area.

In Rupert Murdoch's scheme of things, India is extremely important. Things have moved faster here, and India is now on par with China and could even overtake her.

With hindsight, do you think the separation with Zee last year has been good?

It has definitely been positive. Now there are no restrictions. Indian broadcasting has moved along so quickly that we should have structured the initial deal with Zee differently. Both should have been allowed Hindi and English programming.

What was the rationale of Star's alliance with [Zee Telefilm's chairman] Subhash Chandra in the first place?

We did not get into it. We inherited it.

When Richard Li owned Star, you must remember India was never on the game plan at all. Subhash Chandra came along with an offer of an annual US\$5 million guaranteed returns for the alliance. For Li this was really a bonus. Later, News Corp bought Star, and inherited the alliance.

What is Star TV's relationship with the former chairman of News Television India, Rathikant Basu?

Basu... had several projects in mind, like regional channels. Star TV appreciated them, but it did not fit within our business plan. So he preferred to go his own way.

We continue to support him from outside, and we have even taken a 10 percent stake in his company. Of course, there are conditions too. Like there will be no hiring of our staff and he can't compete in areas like sports and music. With regard to his regional programming and channels, we also have the first right of refusal.

Will we increase our investment? No, I think our commitment will remain pretty much static at 10 percent.

What do you think was Basu's contribution to the split with Zee Telefilms?

The main problem was the deterioration of the relationship with Zee. We got into Hindi programming and it was like waving a red rag at a bull. It was not that we could not use Hindi programming. The agreement specified "majority" and "minority" content. But then Basu did not study our agreement with Zee carefully enough. He blundered down the track so far that there was no turning back. We could have been more reciprocal towards Zee. We could have jointly built up the floundering EL channel that became Zee News.

Do you see a role for the newly formed Indian Broadcasting Foundation (IBF) in setting some industry benchmarks?

The IBF in the present form is no good. It is packed with chaps like Nimbus and Amit Khanna and others who have nothing to do with broadcasting. These are producers and not broadcasters. If they launch channels, then they are most welcome. Now, tell me why should I or Zee reveal to these guys who owes us how much money? We have to form a genuine satellite broadcasters association that will address our issues. 

cover story time capsule

If our television schedules are the autobiography of our culture, what are we telling future generations about where we stand and who we are at the turn of the century? We asked Asia's satellite programming executives what shows they would, if they could, put in a time capsule for viewers one hundred years from now

raising the mammoth



JAMES ROSS

Bloomberg TV, Asia Pacific manager

Newsday Asia-Pacific

... because it focuses on what's happening in Asia, which is a huge personal investment market. Australia, for instance, has the highest percentage of share ownership among adults of any country in the world. The whole focus [of the show] is on money and the most positive things you can do with it, like planning for your children's education. It's not a greed thing.

Bloomberg MoneyCast

... because it airs just before the US markets open and provides a transition to the US from Asia. So many of Asia's markets are so closely allied to the US that we think it is vital to make that transition. The programme, billed as a show with 'news that moves the markets', also gives people information about how they can make money.

Techline/WebWatch

... because they offer market-moving news affecting the cyber sector. We think that in the next year tech stocks are going to be the most exciting market movers. *Techline* also focuses on the technologies that have captured the imagination of everyone interested in news all the time.

BILL BAGGITT

CNN International, managing editor

Q&A

... because it represents a step into interactivity, with e-mail and video representing the coming together of different media. The show allows viewers direct access to our guests through traditional media such as the TV and telephone and new media on the Web.

World Report

... because it brings the world closer together through uncensored and unfiltered presentation, which ties in neatly to what's happening on the Web with access to unfiltered information.

CNN This Morning

... because it is a new block of shows with local content, which fits into CNN's regionalisation strategy. Both *CNN This Morning* and *World Report* speak to that mission of reaching out to our viewers around the world with local programming.

CHRIS BLACKMAN

CNBC Asia, vice president, news programming

dot.commerce

... because the Internet is clearly the new business frontier that will connect and converge businesses everywhere.



spongebob squarepants



no doubt on speakeasy



new adventures of winnie the pooh



Squawkbox

... because the markets are still the big story.

Asian Working Woman

... because they are changing the face of how we do business in the region.

MANNY AYALA

Discovery Networks Asia, vice president, programming,

Ultimate Guide Series

... because it's accessible, beautiful quintessential nature programming looking at different species in the animal kingdom. It also represents one of our most popular programme genres worldwide.

Lonely Planet

... because it offers a unique travel experience for those in search of more than just a holiday, those who are looking for an education, an experience. It's a series about discovery and self-discovery... it shows you life from the ground up, instead of a bird's eye view.

Raising the Mammoth (A "Watch With The World" event)

... because it pushes frontiers of exploration, unearthing new fascinating information about some of the mysteries of our time using historic analysis and science

cover story time capsule

and technology... excellent story telling with scientific breakthroughs, anthropology/sociology, history and nature.

ROBIN PAXTON

Walt Disney Television International Asia Pacific, executive vice president and managing director

New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh

... because it is classic Disney animation and storytelling with timeless, lovable characters for the kids, yet very appealing to the entire family.



cricketer steve waugh [ben radford/allsport]



rugrats

Disney Buzz/Studio D

... because they are our original productions for kids. The weekly *Disney Buzz* is shot on location in Kuala Lumpur, and *Studio D*, is a daily show shot in our Sydney studios. Both are fast-paced, incorporate Disney animation targeted to older kids (9-12), such as *Hercules*, *The Series*, and each show does segments/sketches featuring the hosts around town. Very fun.

The Wonderful World of Disney

... because it's the family showcase which is the longest running in TV history — now 45 years. It's a nightly block for us where we feature Disney animated features and live action movies.

JEFFREY SELAMUTU

Head of programming, Channel [V] International.

Speakeasy

... because it profiles the best of what's out there in the music world and puts the artists into a relevant context. Basically, one-on-one artist interviews specifically for Channel [V].

By Demand

... because it is Channel [V]'s flagship request show.

The Channel [V] Countdown

... because it covers what's popular with the youth of Asia and also what the channel is giving exposure to.

ROSS CROWLEY

Foxtel, assistant director, programming and head of acquisitions and drama development, with responsibility for flagship entertainment channel, Fox 8

The Simpsons (Fox)

... because the Simpson characters are ageless and timeless... still fresh and hip, even though this series has been around for about 10 years. This element of agelessness and freshness echoes the current mood at the beginning of a new century — the feeling of starting afresh.

Buffy: the Vampire Slayer (Fox)

... because it's a hugely popular series which appeals to the younger demographic where Fox 8 is at. The vampire is timeless and ageless... [the characters are] invulnerable... This element of invulnerability again has echoes in the mood at the beginning of the century.



offers great production values, fantastic special effects and a great story. It has elements of *Star Wars* and *Lost in Space* — and equal quantities of exciting adventure and humour.

VIP

... because it's about style over substance, and that is its beauty. It's colourful, bold, funny and a good-looking production [starring Pamela Anderson Lee]. It doesn't take itself at all seriously, but at the same time offers loads of glamour and eye-candy. It's also one of the shows responsible for raising awareness of AXN.

RUSSELL WOLFF

ESPN Star Sports, senior vice president, programming and event management

Inside Cricket

... because it's an in-house programme that demonstrates the high production values ESPN Star Sports (ESS) brings to sports television and its leadership in cricket production.

The 8th ESPY Awards

... because it had all the glitter and glamour of the Academys and the soul of the Grammys... [and] paid tribute to all the outstanding athletes of 1999.

The X Games

... because it has become one of the most recognisable icons for the Generation X.

KATRINA SOUTON

Nickelodeon, senior director, network operations and programming,

Spongebob Squarepants

... because it's our latest worldwide hit and because we love the concept of a sponge who lives in a pineapple under the sea and wears pants!

Rugrats

... because it's Nickelodeon's most endearing and enduring show.

Kenan and Kel

... because it's a live-action sitcom with universal humour that appeals to kids of all ages and nationalities. It's also come up in research around the world as a favourite among kids from the Philippines to Russia and the UK. 

Jerry Springer (Universal)

... Part of me says not to nominate this, but one of the programmes that we're recognised for is *Jerry Springer*, which is shocking, appalling and trashy. Universal trades off the fact that Springer is at the bottom end of the talkshow market. Far be it for us to judge the quality of the content, the viewers love the raw and real humanity paraded on the screen, as trashy and tacky as it is. It's just compelling viewing. They see something with a bit of grit. There's rawness and reality in Springer, compared with the highly polished product they find on network TV. We have been airing this series since Fox 8 began in 1995 and it's still strong.

BETTY TSUI

AXN, vice president, programming

Who Dares Wins

... because it's fun and adventurous and dares people to do crazy and challenging things. The more serious challenges are complemented with the humorous, irreverent stuff that the show offers.

Farscape

... because this is a quality sci-fi series that





dot and dashes

No more Kobe beef, airport limos or five-star retreats for broadcasting execs who have joined the Internet gold rush. Janine Stein spoke to a few former television people about millionaires in the making, travelling economy, and what it's like being part of the hottest new group around

THE online universe is not short of an acronym. IPO, b2b, c2c, b2c, even e2e rain down as the world claws its way up the Internet learning curve. Now add "Yetties" to the list to describe the "young, entrepreneurial, tech-based" group at the forefront of the dotcom exuberance.

As the new millionaire-in-the-making mentality takes hold, traditional businesses are scrambling — and mostly failing — to hold onto many of their best people. And Asia's TV broadcast operations are proving to be fertile breeding grounds for the Yettie. Everyone from business development executives and public relations managers to producers and ad sales directors is being tapped for or is tapping into the new growth vein.

Even within established organisations, more risk-averse staffers are looking to this new phenomenon for their next workaday challenge. Barely a broadcaster has remained unaffected by the exodus of twenty- and thirty-somethings — and even forty-somethings, although there are a lot fewer of them — to a more exciting world. China.com is said to be fired by major Star TV youth power, i-Cable's broadband Internet service lost its top three executives to the Web. Satellite broadcasters MTV, Turner and others are staring at the same kind of talent-drain they themselves

created in the advertising and terrestrial television industries when they burst upon the Asian market as start-ups almost a decade ago.

There are no formal figures on the impact of the new ventures on job creation statistics in Asia. In the US, estimates are that Internet-related jobs soared from 1.6 million in the first quarter of 1998 to 2.3 million in the first quarter a year later. If Asia is three to five years behind the US in Internet development, the current job market upheaval could be only the beginning.

Executive search companies are being besieged. "It's been amazing," says Lynn Ogden, managing director for executive search firm, Korn/Ferry International's global consumer, entertainment and media practice in the Asia Pacific. "We can't move fast enough," she adds. And she's not expecting things to slow down soon. The situation is exacerbated by an expected surge in e-commerce and high growth across all sectors as Asian economies recover.

With a hiring crisis looming, Korn/Ferry International has set up an online recruiting company, Futurestep.com, as part of a global partnership with the *Wall Street Journal*. Futurestep rolled out last year in Australia, Japan and New Zealand. Hong Kong, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur have just launched and India and China will follow in first half 2000.

The broadcast execs who have left to do their own thing are moving too fast to worry about what they've left behind — million-dollar packages, relative security, bonuses,

paid holidays, envelopes on tap, and all the other trappings of what the old school would call being gainfully employed.

Do they miss it? In a word, no. "I'm trying really hard here to think," says Sudhanshu Sarronwala, MTV Networks Asia's former Southeast Asia managing director and co-founder of Internet start-up soundbuzz.com. "Maybe no more bricks and walls... and thank you Mr Floyd," says MTV India's former general manager, Sunil Lulla, who took a job marketing alcohol in India before joining Indian start-up, indya.com, as chief executive officer. indya.com is a consumer portal — "about India as the world sees her, and about the world as India sees her" — being developed by Microland's Global Internet Venture, with advertising and e-commerce driving revenue.

"Risks? Nothing...." says Turner's former business development director, Suberna Shringla, who has set up his own start-up Internet consultancy to assist Web entrepreneurs to sharpen their numbers and finesse their business plans. "Maybe I sacrificed a lucrative, solid and promising career at Turner, but the opportunity to do my own business and learn all about the Internet is invaluable," Shringla says.

"I think the only thing you can possibly miss is going into a company without a known brand backing you," Sarronwala adds. "It's an easy opening. But I think the Internet is interesting enough for everyone to want to listen anyway. In the short month since I left MTV, I haven't missed anything."

Not even a monthly salary? "We all get

rupali wadhvi, indya.com



some living expenses that helps us eat and stuff. There is money coming in from day one but we don't call it a salary as such," Sarronwala says.

Another former MTV staffer, Alex Feldman, has deferred paying himself a salary until his start-up's first round of financing is complete. Feldman, who has ploughed "a large percentage" of his personal savings into the venture, announced his resignation in February this year to launch a business-to-business Internet venture, b2bcast.com.

Despite the thrill of owning high-potential equity in the companies they are building, for now there is the reality of spending their own money on day-to-day operating essentials and keeping costs as low as possible. "When I did development projects for Disney and Turner, I never did cash flow on a weekly basis... now it's down and dirty, the metre is ticking," Shringla says.

"You have to decide what is absolutely necessary and stretch your dollars," Feldman says. "This means thinking twice about expensive nights on the town, but to be honest, the work load is putting a dampener on this no matter what the bank account might say," he adds.

Feldman has offices in Singapore and in Philadelphia for b2bcast.com, an "end-to-end business communications solutions provider and content aggregator". In plain terms, this means using broadcasting over the Internet or Webcasting to help businesses and executives communicate better, faster and more efficiently with their investors, suppliers, customers, employees and the public. Original business programming and content is being planned.

Also in Singapore (which means some of the best government support and incentives in the world), Sarronwala has set up Soundbuzz.com with partners including

sunil lulla, indya.com



Shabham Melwani, who used to take care of MTV Networks' Southeast Asia service publicity. He also leads the Webcasting project for UTV Group chairman, Ronnie Screwvala, as a separate project called Sharkstream.com (the original name, shootingstars.com was changed because of registration problems).

Soundbuzz.com, which goes live mid-March, entails legal MP3 encrypted sales. Sharkstream.com, which rolls out later in March, involves audio and video streaming. Sarronwala has equity stakes in both ventures.

First round financing for Soundbuzz.com has just been completed. Market response, Sarronwala says, "has been unbelievable... this is a breath of fresh air for the record labels. It's their first conversation with people talking about legal MP3".

The site will also provide a platform for unknown artists. "The idea is to create a buzz around unsigned artists," he says. "For every artist a label signs, there are 50 or 100 artists who are not signed. It doesn't mean they aren't good, it just means that the record labels don't have the resources to promote every artist. Soundbuzz gives the labels a less costly way of promoting unknown artists and genres."

Sharkstream, on the other hand, involves entertainment video streaming,

I feel like I've reclaimed my life,
that I'm no longer a robot in a
corporate environment

Suberna Shringla

and will incorporate a section for Screwvala's UTV productions, as well as offer hosting opportunities for outside production houses. Sarronwala promises robust technology and full-on video. "It's like VCD coming at you at 1.5 megabits per second," he says. "It's the most awesome thing I have experienced in my life in Internet terms." The site will be 30 percent broadband and 70 percent narrowband to start, migrating to broadband as the technology rolls out across the region.

To boost broadband content, Sarronwala has commissioned eight scripts for the development of snappy, bit-sized Internet-specific programming. "I want little pieces of entertainment that jump out and hit you so that you go out and look for it." These are likely to take the form of three-minute soaps, or two-minute sitcoms, where surfers can change the outcome. Other options include live game shows with virtual hosts and contestants from around the world.

The final Sharkstream element is the fun bit — an archive of stock footage and non-copyright B-roll that can be downloaded for use anywhere from presentations to resumes. Users will be invited to upload their own footage onto the site for wider use. "We aim to make it self sustaining," Sarronwala says.

THOSE riding high on the start-up energy talk of being part of the team moving the world forward. "This will profoundly change lives," says Shringla.

His decision was made on the eve of a long-term contract signing with Turner "for a tremendously exciting job, but I decided to see what's on the Internet for me... I'm a development guy and I saw my most interesting opportunities in the Internet business... I don't want to wake up three or four

business internet start-ups

years down the line and discover that I never did anything about it."

Ditto for Lulla, who says, "India is gearing up for an i-volution and I would rather lead the band than follow it." Convinced, like everyone else, that the Internet is "going to change the way we live, behave, interact", Lulla nevertheless says he is not sure "if we can even attempt to identify what will emerge and the mystique adds all the fun".

Sarronwala says his move was driven by the conviction that both his areas of expertise — music and television — "are definitely going to be impacted by the Internet... and I want to be part of the team moving that impact. It's my own little way of changing the world."

Ownership of a piece of the future is crucial all round. "It really changes the focus of your commitment," says former Star TV staffer, Dave Dennis, who joined year-old start-up, AsiaWorldOnline.com, earlier this year.

MTV, Feldman adds, "was never going to offer me a chance to own the businesses. I was working really hard but the ultimate rewards were going to Viacom's stock... the Internet offers me a chance to build a business that will potentially give me financial security that I could only have dreamed of in a salaried position".

There's also that "zingy" feeling which, says MTV India's former communications executive, Rupali Wadhi, that you just don't get when a brand or a company is already established.

ALTHOUGH it's not going to make them as rich as Li family scion and Star TV founder, Richard Li, nine months after he launched his technology flagship Pacific Century Cyber-Works, generating online opportunities within already established structures seems a whole lot less work than chucking in the suit, dumping the monthly paycheck and jumping off the fat cat jet with only enthusiasm as a parachute.

For the moment, Dennis, who headed up Star TV's Indonesian joint venture before politics and economics destroyed it, dons a suit and tie (attire the investment community still respects, he says) for his role as AsiaWorldOnline.com chief executive officer. One of AsiaWorldOnline's portals, gopinoy.com, already receives two million hits a month with 500,000 page views and an average of 244,000 surfers staying for more than 12 minutes. It's all the "stickiness" Dennis needed to hear about before he said yes to the job.



suberno shringla, internet consultant

While his contract at Star TV would have ended mid-year anyway, Dennis' migration to the Internet suits his penchant for start-up businesses, he says. His brief at AsiaWorldOnline.com is to roll out country specific sites and move "quickly and aggressively" towards an IPO. The plan is to have about 27 Asian country portals in three years.

Amanda Wang, who left her investment banking job at Communications Equity Associates at the end of 1999 for the role as business development director for Hong Kong-based ActionAsia.com, says there are advantages in joining an existing company. "But you also get existing problems," she adds.

ActionAsia, which has already carved a niche in the adventure travel market with its seven-year-old magazine title, is planning to upgrade its Web site in tandem with its print operation, a series of adventure races, exhibitions and television productions. Wang hopes to launch the vortal — vertical portal — by the middle of this year. "We want to meet every need of the adventure traveller and the service providers to that sector in Asia," she says. The site will include everything from the best diving in Asia to online weather bulletins and equipment sales.

WHILE they have one eye on the future, many of the immediate changes are more personal as Yetties adjust to their new lifestyle status. Most say the major adjustments have been in mindset. And that's quite apart from selling the car and moving to another town, which Wadhi did at Internet speed to take the post as



alex feldman, b2bcast.com

communications head for Microland in Bangalore.

"The biggest change has been psychological," Shringla says. "Of course your physical environment changes and you come down to earth, but the most profound change is mental," he adds. The initial stress of his first few days on his own has given way to a system of setting deadlines and targets. "You have to totally benchmark yourself, put in your own milestones, create your own plans and stick with them," Shringla continues.

"The biggest personal change," Feldman adds, "is that there is no clock ticking and I'm not working within the structure of someone else's day. When you are running your own business, you have to move yourself, to make your own structure, and you have to be a complete self-starter. How much your business grows depends entirely on you."

In addition to the mind space cleared by not having to manage the inevitable internal corporate bureaucracy and politics, most of the new entrepreneurs have slid easily into the "just do it" framework of small outfits.

"If you want to move at Internet speed, you have to get out there and just do it," Sarronwala says. "The real kick is that everything about the company and about an Internet start-up is external... you have got to get out there and do it. It's just such a sexy thing... the whole machinery is two and a half people... you need to move fast and need to be convincing and if something is not working, say 'okay next' and move on."

The Internet environment requires a whole new approach, Wang says. "It's

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constantly about being first in the space rather than being the best, even though we think we are the best," she says.

Dennis calls the new decision making process "about 30 times faster... you agree on one day and implement the day after. It's the only way to be the first mover," he says.

Perhaps contrary to his business development training, Shringla says he didn't do heaps of research before he made the decision to quit the corporate life and do his own thing. "It wasn't necessary," he says. "So much is out there one would have to be a fool not to notice it and know about it. The tidal wave is about to hit Asia... there are fantastic opportunities out here," he adds.

The risks have, of course, been considered. "I'm well aware that most new businesses fail, but I am not afraid to take a risk," Feldman says. "Especially when the rewards are so great."

And the challenges. "I can always go back to a job," Shringla says, echoing Wang's notions of Internet experience smoothing the way to "infinitely employable" status in the job market of the future. "But the opportunities with the intensity of the present will not be there. Five years down the line, the Internet is going to be business as usual. Right now it's a pioneering effort," Shringla adds.

HAVING pounded the VC pavements along with everyone else looking for a way into the Internet pot of gold, few still harbour the illusion that venture capital will be flung at every half-baked stupididea.com with no redeeming financial features.

Although most common sense investment rules have been turned on their heads, raising money still requires a unique selling point — or a Li family member. And there clearly aren't enough of those to go around.

The first step is translating an idea into something to which money-men can relate, which is where Shringla's finance MBA from ENPC in Paris comes in handy. "People are desperate for guidance," Shringla says, adding that he has been besieged with requests for advice. The most urgent need is for a sounding board, help with the numbers part of the plan, and tips on negotiating with venture capitalists.

The first idea he came across — CETV boss Robert Chua's Internet-based consumer and customer services forum — "was a killer", Shringla says. "I saw the

opportunity to develop a solid economic model which now has to be executed... that's the fun part."

The venture, Complainasia.com, will eventually include a web of country-specific sites. The first site for Hong Kong goes live in March.

Complainasia.com is about people power, Shringla says. "We are providing an early warning system... when companies know that there is a public forum for consumers, they will treat their customers with much more respect."

THE biggest casualty of the online environment seems to be sleep. "The pace saps you but the nervous energy keeps you going," Sarronwala says. "You can be very tired but you can't sleep."

Perhaps not an angle Internet-speed executives take time to ponder, there is

Maybe no more
bricks and walls... and thank
you Mr Floyd
Sunil Lulla

another downside to the whole new way of thinking about self, employment and earning a living — the impact on those who, through choice or inertia, are left behind. "Silicon Valley is looking at me wide-eyed when I outline a package that's less than I got four years ago in satellite television," one wannabe Internet executive says.

Ogden says some balk at the start-up packages being offered, and think they are worth a lot more. But, she adds, "you're looking at companies where the CEOs are taking virtually no money and they are looking for others willing to take similar high risks". At the same time, some start-ups need a lot of hand-holding in defining job descriptions and payment packages.

NEWJOBS.COM

London-based Zee Telefilms deputy CEO, Bhaskar Mazumdar, has resigned to join Silicon Valley Plc as chief operating officer. The listed company is said to have plans to focus on Webcasting and other broadband services.

Discovery Channel's South Asia regional director, Jayesh Vaidya, has resigned to join Internet portal Chaitime.com as managing director.

Alli McCullough, Star Movies' publicist, left Star TV at the beginning of March after six and a half years to join Hong Kong-based sports Internet company, SportsNet Global Holdings.

The Discovery Channel's China distribution senior manager, Louis Boswell, is now the chief operating officer of iam@sia, a Hong Kong-based internet start-up. Details have not yet been disclosed.

Zenith Media Asia Pacific chief executive officer, Antony Young, has quit the Hong Kong-based advertising agency to join an Internet start-up. Young is not saying what the project is right now, but he'll be ready to talk about it in April.

And finally, only hours after his sudden departure from News Corp/Star TV at the end of February, the books were already open on how quickly Gareth Chang would join an Internet company. Best bets were for Richard Li's Pacific Century Cyber-Works or Hong Kong property company Sun Hung Kai's new SunEvision venture, which has just announced an upcoming listing on Hong Kong's new Growth Enterprise Market. 

The should-I-stay-should-I-go dilemma is causing as many sleepless nights for those who choose security now instead of possible wealth later. As one dithering would-be Yettie said: "My colleagues are going to be millionaires and I'm sitting here with my thumb up my #@\$%*". 



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modem operandi



zaki rakib

i-Cable is rolling out its cable modem service in a market not yet convinced of the advantages of Internet speed. Yet there's no-one who thinks it won't happen — eventually

PEOPLE in Hong Kong, says Terayon's chief executive officer Zaki Rakib, will be hooked on broadband. Wishful thinking, prophetic or marketing hype from a broadband systems company whose global cable modem market share has risen from less than 10 percent a year ago to 15 percent today?

Given the perhaps surprisingly low take up of broadband in the territory so far, optimism in the short term seems unjustified. Hong Kong Telecom's broadband service, launched May 1998, has fewer than 100,000 subscribers. Wharf Holdings subsidiary i-Cable's cable modem service, which offers speeds of 10 Mbit/s, has not yet disclosed subscriber rates to its service, which launched officially at the end of February.

For now, it seems, the territory's broadband players, which will include Star TV and Richard Li's Pacific Century Cyber-Works, among others, are ahead of their audience.

"This is the beginning of a long-term partnership," Rakib insists, having signed a non-exclusive deal as cable modem supplier to i-Cable.

His confidence revolves around Hong Kong's high penetration of personal computers and Terayon's SCDMA (synchronous code division multiple access) technology, as opposed to the TDMA (time division multiple access) technology. Developed from scratch at Terayon, SCDMA, Rakib says, is best placed to overcome the RF interference of Hong Kong's high-rise environment. It's also able to support more advanced services.

The i-Cable cable modem project is Terayon's biggest in Asia outside of Japan, where the California-based company has deployed "tens of thousands" of modems

at systems including Jupiter Cable. China, Rakib adds, is expected to provide the next big cable modem opportunity, with massive deployment in Shenzhen and Beijing towards the second half of 2001. "In places like China, there are more people connected to cable than there are to regular phone wires," he says. Active trials in India offer potential for commercial deployment in second half 2000.

In rolling out its new service, i-Cable is

Once the advantages
are known to the public,
they will appreciate it

Zaki Rakib

likely to face aggressive competition from telecommunications operators and their DSL services. "Competition depends on the country and the aggressiveness of the telco," Rakib says. "Cable still has an advantage of one year or 18 months in terms of understanding. But DSL will catch up, and I believe there will be a place for both." Estimates are that domestic users will be 60-70 percent cable and the rest will use DSL services.

Having made its technology decisions, i-Cable has rolled out a selection of packages, including the option of renting the cable modem for HK\$30 (US\$4) per

month. The retail cost price of the modem is HK\$1,890 (US\$243)

The basic service is HK\$298 (US\$38) per month. Households that subscribe to the one-year plan pay four monthly instalments of HK\$720 (US\$93) — or a total of HK\$2,880 (US\$371), which works out to HK\$260 (US\$33) a month.

Bundling discounts are offered to cable TV subscribers, who pay HK\$248 (US\$32) a month for the basic cable modem service, and receive a HK\$50 (US\$6) per month reduction in the monthly cable fee.

At the moment the cable modem service is only available to households in seven areas, including the high-rent Central and Mid-Levels districts, as well as the densely populated Wan Chai, Sha Tin and Tsuen Wan areas. The system launched with 100,000 cable-ready households. About 80,000 households a month are modified with the cable modem terminal system.

By end 2000, the connections to 4,000 buildings, representing one million households, will have been modified for cable modem use. By the end of 2001, 8,000 buildings, representing 1.7 million households, will be cable ready, which gives the new service access to almost 100 percent of Hong Kong's 1.9 million homes.

i-Cable has also rolled out two portals — icable.com and wonderplace.com. icable.com features i-news produced from the cable network's in-house news division, which also produces Cable TV's two news channels. wonderplace.com targets Hong Kong's youth with games, meeting rooms and a "loveletter cafe". Although both are available to dial-up subscribers, they are designed for broadband users.

Now all i-Cable has to do in Hong Kong is get the message out. As Rakib says, "once the advantages are known to the public, they will appreciate it." 



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SkyCable's new cable modem service enters a market where phone lines can still be a problem. R S Sukthankar looks at what's on offer and why the company thinks people will go for it

THE Philippines' Sky Vision Inc, which trades as SkyCable, has set aside between Ps1.5 billion and Ps2.5 billion (US\$37.2 million to US\$62.5 million) for its latest project — a cable modem service aimed at maximising returns from its existing cable architecture.

About Ps600 million (US\$14.9 million) has been spent so far on upgrading and rehabilitating sections of the infrastructure in Metro Manila.

In sharp contrast to snail's pace development in much of the Philippines' television industry in the past two years, SkyCable is expecting the new service to be profitable in its second year of operation.

Dubbed ZPDee and pronounced zippy-dee — a play on the word "speedy", according to SkyCable's managing director, Carlos Tria — the service has so far been rolled out in the Philippines' wealthiest areas. These include Makati, Ortigas and Pasig.

ZPDee's initial target market is SkyCable's existing subscriber base. About 5,000 households are expected to sign up for cable modem Internet access by the end of this year. Growth of 300 percent is anticipated over the next two years.

These estimates are conservative, SkyCable says, given Internet usage numbers in the Philippines. The number of paying Internet subscribers nationwide has already reached the 80,000 mark and actual user numbers are thought to be much higher.

For the moment, ZPDee is the only cable Internet service in the Philippines based on open standards. It is delivered through Cisco Systems' universal broadband router (UBR7246) and Motorola cable modems (SURFboard SB3100). Both systems are DOCSIS compliant, a feature key to their selection since it enables interoperability between different



carlos tria

brands and suites of equipment and therefore flexibility when making upgrades.

"Obsolescence is not going to be an issue," Tria says. "We can upgrade the system without being tied to one supplier, who may or may not develop improvements to their hardware."

This is obviously important in adding new services to the platform. For instance, the SB3100 allows prioritisation of voice calls to support real-time Voice over Internet Protocol, a feature that can be tapped when market conditions and regulations permit the introduction of cable telephony.

In a further bid to future-proof its investment, SkyCable has incorporated other features into the service. One of these is a mirror TUCOWS (the ultimate collection of WINSOC software) on a local site from which customers can download the latest

software. A news service, FTP/Web service and chat sites running on an unmodulated, fully automated server manned by bots (software robots) are also available, as is a 24-hour help desk manned by (human!) technical specialists.

A range of price and service packages to a maximum of Ps2,750 (US\$68) has been developed. A typical VAT inclusive plan for Ps1,700 (US\$42) per month will allow downloads up to 100 megabytes (MB), Ps2,200 (US\$55) allows 200 MB and so on. Additional MBs are charged at Ps10 (US\$0.25) each. The cable modems are free, but subscribers are charged for access to the system.

New business director, Russell Sy explains: "We're going to bundle the cable modem but we're going to metre the service and bill our customers per megabyte. So light users will pay less than heavy users — it's fairer all round. And it will mean that our lines will not get congested and slow the system down."

Even with such measures, SkyCable has built its system to include five redundant, fully dedicated high-speed connections to the Internet backbone reaching different points in the United States and Asia. Tria says this guarantees consistent speed of the service, no matter how large user volume goes.

Like every other regional cable modem service, SkyCable is pushing the speed feature of its ZPDee platform.

Sy says speeds of 40 Mbit/s are theoretically possible, but very few customer computers or content provider servers can take advantage of this. For example, the Ethernet cards on most computers can only go to 10 Mbit/s. In actual, practical use, the ZPDee cable Internet service can deliver Web sites and file downloads at speeds of two Mbit/s. Which is considerably faster than current dial-up services, the best of which can reach speeds of up to 56 Kbit/s. 

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	20 ○ Operations Manager	73 ○ Other (please specify)
	21 ○ Other (please specify)	
		4. HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE EMPLOYED AT YOUR COMPANY?
		91 ○ 1-10
		92 ○ 11-100
		93 ○ 101-500
		94 ○ 501-1000
		95 ○ 1000 +

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IF THE coffee — sorry, latte — machine at Asiacontent.com would accept stock options, it too would be offered a piece of the new economy's pay packet *du jour*. "Everyone has them, right down to the tea lady in Beijing," says Christopher Justice, Internet mover, Web worker, and, more recently, chief executive officer of Asiacontent.com.

Welcome to a poster company for the economy — a place of tie-less, office-less, millionaires-in-the-making, virtually no apparent hierarchy (or profits), all the "empowering" that new economy employees demand, and the kind of whiplash growth that causes old economy companies to squirm.

Established in May 1999, Asiacontent.com Ltd would like to become, among other things, the prime one-stop-shop Web choice for international broadcasters looking to fast-track their Asian localisation roll-outs. Officially, the company mission is "creating premium branded local content, delivering targeted online advertising and providing e-commerce services for local audiences across Asia".

Right now, the Asiacontent billboard features three big television names: MTV Networks, Los Angeles-based distributor E! Entertainment and the Internet arm of US broadcaster, NBCi.

MTV and E! are working with media division, Asiacontent.com Media (incorporating the former Tricast, which was acquired by Asiacontent.com in September 1999 and rebranded earlier this year), for content development.

NBCi has tied up with Asiacontent's e-commerce division, Asiacommerce.com, to roll out local versions of NBCi's US e-commerce ventures — Xoom.com direct marketing site and NBCi's gateway Snap.com in South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia.

There's a third prong to Asiacontent.com's growth strategy — advertising. This business is being developed through DoubleClick Asia, a joint venture with DoubleClick in the US.

AsiaContent, a paragon of new media thinking, is no more eager to discuss financials than many of the old media that went before it. Unless it suits a particular purpose, of course. Suffice it to say that in the first week of March, the company closed its second round of financing with another US\$30 million in its coffers. The new investors include NBC Internet Inc,

which led the second round financing, and CNET Networks. Both companies already have stakes in Asiacontent.

First round backers included AsiaTech Ventures, GE Equity, Hambrecht & Quist Asia Pacific, Intel Pacific Inc, TDF Management of Singapore, Viacom Inc and a syndicate of private investors led by Hambrecht & Quist co-founder, William Hambrecht.

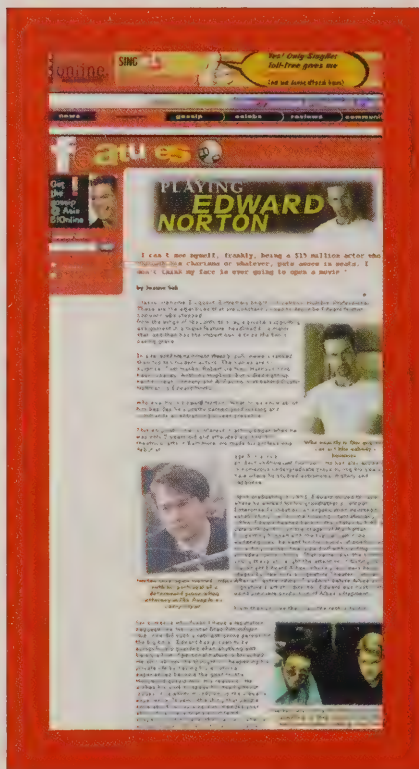
Details of the joint ventures, licensing deals or "strategic alliances" remain closely guarded. Asiacontent says the new funds will be used to help expand, through global partnerships, its media publishing, Internet advertising, and e-commerce platforms in Asia, as well as hiring more staff.

Broadly, Asiacontent's *modus operandi* seems to be launching with an alliance and then migrating the relationship to a full-fledged joint venture with varying ownership stakes. This was the deal with

MTV and with technology company CNET, which converted its alliance into a joint venture in January this year after a two year "strategic relationship" and committed US\$13 million to extending CNET's brand and reach across Asia.

Like many new economy companies, AsiaContent is creating a web of projects and investments. As part of the NBCi Asia deal, for example, NBCi took a small stake in Asiacontent.com. Asiacontent holds 65 percent of NBCi Asia. NBCi has an option to increase its 35 percent holding to 60 percent.

There are also the investments in other companies. In January, Asiacommerce.com was one of four investors that injected S\$20.7 million (US\$12 million) into Singapore-based auction and classified advertising site, SurfingBananas.com. This was billed as the largest first round of financing in Asia



Asiacontent.com is wooing broadcasters with a one-stop-shop plan that will fast-track Web site localisation plans in Asia. All they want in return is online control of the brand.

Janine Stein looks at a company that's closer than most to dotting the i's and crossing the t's of the new economy

dot the AYES

to date.

If anything is causing the market to scratch its head in wonderment, it's this: how did Asiacontent pull off joint ventures that seem to own the exclusive online rights for Asia for powerful international brands such as MTV? In China, for instance, it seems almost certain that MTV's online presence and brand equity will overtake that of the satellite TV music channel, which, along with other foreign satellite services, is still officially banned. Ditto in South Korea, where there are for the moment strict limits on foreign content on TV channels.

Detractors say it's crazy. Supporters say it's the quickest way to grab that all-important first-mover advantage that is so much a part of the new economy. Some opinion also says broadcasters have enough of their own problems understanding Asia's television audiences, never mind coping with all the new curve balls thrown up by the Worldwide Web.

Supporting the decision to license brands to Asiacontent, some satellite programming industry executives admit the Internet challenge is more than they may be able to handle internally right now. The tug-of-war for online control between Asia and foreign head offices, not to mention existing joint ventures in Asia for TV operations, may also blur the issue of Asian Web site roll-out strategy.

"We don't have to be the ones to do it," says one of Asia's satellite programming executives, who spoke on condition of anonymity. "We just need one [Web strategy] yesterday... it's simply a matter of expediency... Once they [head office] have the US house in order, they will want to take their brands back and try to create their own structures. But as an entry strategy, it's ideal."

Bringing in the experts — Asiacontent in this case — also circumvents an issue only whispered about at the moment in broadcast television's younger ranks. Many aren't quite sure that those above them understand what the Web is all about, and cringe at what they see as the annoying, and terribly *passe*, habit of asking about costs, revenues and, horrors, profits. They don't spend enough time on the Web, the next generation says, shuddering at the thought of a suit-driven, traditional, online strategy.

Asiacontent simply points to its record: three country-specific MTV-branded Web sites in less than 12 months, including

relaunching the English-language www.mtvasia.com and the Chinese mtvchinese.com. Its most recent is MTV Korea Online (www.mtvkorea.co.kr), which was launched mid-February 2000.

"The value we bring to our partners gives them a first mover advantage in Asia," Justice says. "Asia is a big place. It's not easy for the typical Internet company to understand, let alone form a strategy and implement it."

There's another factor — focus. "I believe that a 100-percent dedicated focus on the Internet also means that we get the best and the brightest mindshare and attention to create great sites. We are not competing for the best talent within an organisation. We are the best, because that's what we do."

So far, Asiacontent Media seems to be holding together its current deals without any trouble, and is continuing its aggres-

end mentioned to the acquisitions and joint ventures mission. The office in Japan, currently at 25 people, will have 150 by year end.

Its latest deal, announced in early March, is an Asian sports joint venture with global Internet sports media company, SportsLine.com. The venture will develop local language, SportsLine-branded Web sites for all markets outside of Japan. Asiacontent.com will own 80 percent of the joint venture.

Another deal upon which the ink has barely dried is for the creation of a fashion and lifestyle site for Japan.

The content development strategy varies from venture to venture, but is standard in the creation of a team on the ground in each country. The resources that are able to be shared — technical expertise and infrastructure and management systems, for instance — limit expansion costs.

In most cases, some of the content is taken off the parent sites. CNet's Asian sites, for instance, take up to 50 percent of its information off the international CNet site. About 20 percent is shared between regional sites and between 20-30 percent is country specific.

Long-term, China and India offer the biggest potential, Justice says, echoing the TV executives who came before him. Few dispute Asiacontent's successes, although some point out the company is too new and that the numbers haven't been tallied yet. So what, says a new market unconcerned for the moment about old values. Merrill Lynch has listed Asiacontent.com as a likely candidate for a listing in 2000, which would put it among the estimated 100 Asian Internet companies expected to go for an IPO this year.

Asia's infrastructure limitations are one of the hurdles Asiacontent — and its competitors — faces in presenting knock-your-socks-off features that surfers in fast-connection countries enjoy. At the moment, high-speed broadband is limited largely to Hong Kong and Singapore.

There is also some criticism of the content, which can be poorly written and not as edgy as hip young things in Asia would like it to be.

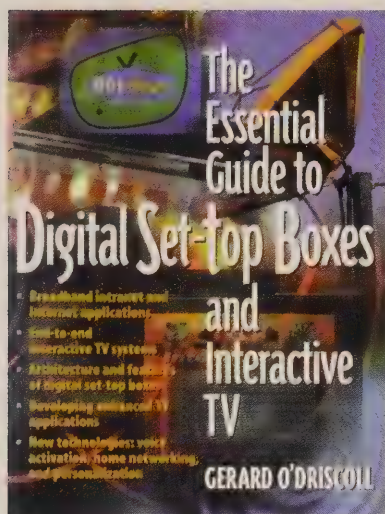
Like profits in the online world, none of that appears to concern anyone at this stage. "They have great brands," said one entertainment broadcaster not yet in the Asiacontent loop, adding: "And that looks great on Wall Street". 

it's simply a matter
of expediency... Once they
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they will want to take their
brands back ...
But as an entry strategy,
it's ideal

Satellite programmer

sive expansion programme. From 30 staff in Singapore one year ago, the former Tricast now has a staff of more than 350 in eight countries, including India, with no

Year of the BOX



Gerard O'Driscoll has peered inside the set top box of the future — and written a feature-by-feature account of everything he thinks we need to know about our new best friends. Janine Stein and John Lewis look at “The Essential Guide to Digital Set-Top Boxes and Interactive TV” from different ends of the techie knowledge spectrum

ENTER anorak city, the place where techies lurk behind impenetrable geek-speak, fiddling about with wires for fun and making set-top magic in their spare time. It's not that the rest of us aren't interested in the digital revolution coming our way. It's just difficult to keep all the new business jargon and concepts in check, much less to get onto friendly terms with the essential digital-era techno-terms.

What happens when something comes along that looks like it might, at last, make ordinary-person sense of all the stuff that makes most people's eyes glaze over, the QAMs, the QPSKs, and the DRAMs of the new world order? Not to mention why EPGs look the way they do and how set-

top Web browsing actually works.

As I see it, we all have two choices. We can grab the opportunity to learn a little about the forces that are already ravaging old ways of doing things. Or we can talk around what we don't understand and pass up on the chance to deepen our grasp of the opportunities ahead. Either way, we cannot escape the reality of digital television and what it's going to mean to the broadcasting business.

As author Gerard O'Driscoll and publishers Prentice Hall warn, just in case no-one had noticed: “There's a revolution coming to your TV: a digital, interactive, Internet-enabled revolution that will make possible services you've never imagined! The next TV revolution comes with new

technologies, new standards, new architectures and new business paradigms.”

And, they go on to promise, the guide offers “a single source for up-to-the-minute insight into every aspect of next generation digital TV”. This life lesson begins at the very beginning with point-by-point answers to a simple question: “What will I learn?”

This is a fine and unintimidating way to draw people in. Among other things, the author says, I will learn about how a set-top box works, about the differences between developing applications for a TV environment versus a PC environment, about the role of smart cards, the relationship between set-tops and client/server computing, and about the most popular development environments such as OpenTV, PlanetWeb, MHEG-5 and Liberate. I will also understand the architecture of an end-to-end (or e2e in the new online speak) digital TV system.

So what actually happened? Well, I'm not going to list these 300 pages as one of my desert island picks. And it's a difficult one to digest at one, or even 10, sittings. But as a semi-idiot's guide to the technology behind the whizz-bang applications coming our way, it is much appreciated and is worthy of a valued spot on a crowded Hong Kong-sized office shelf.

Most of the wow factor is contained in the final chapter on advanced set-top box applications, including an explanation of wireless home networks, why we need

People often don't realise that behind the simple end user interface they see on their television set, there is a complex network architecture that is required to support the various applications

Gerard O'Driscoll

them, what's on offer and what works best.

Of course it's the weird and the wonderful, rather than the explanations of Java, Havi or Jini (as useful as they may prove to be at some undetermined point in the future), that provide the best take-away value. Imagine a voice-activated set-top, which will allow users to tell the box what to do. O'Driscoll says the voice function should be available this year. What about the idea of managing your house by remote control, as in telling it, via the Internet-linked set-top box, to turn the oven and the lights on before you even leave the office.

With no technical expertise upon which to judge the contents and their balance, I have to trust O'Driscoll's judgement that everything I need to know is here.

And is it? For that, we turn to John Lewis, Pace Microtechnology's new business development manager for Asia Pacific...

A 300-page book dedicated to digital set-top boxes and interactive TV? It must be an industry first for such a comprehensive work on this rapidly developing area of digital TV.

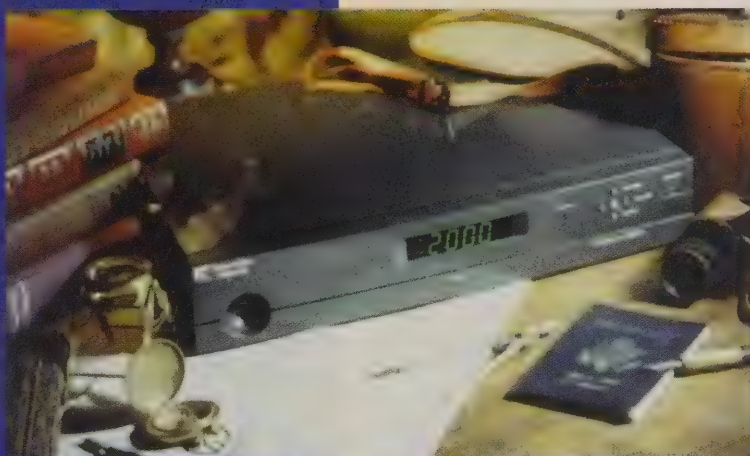
My first impression was, "How could anyone find so much to write on the subject of the humble set-top box?" Surely there are no questions left unanswered.

If the job of a critic is to be critical, there are a few issues in the book that could have been tackled in a different way.

Firstly, for a book of this size, it would not be unreasonable to have included a chapter dedicated to chip set vendors showing their current designs and future roadmaps. These are the most important set-top box design elements in driving down prices while increasing functionality.

The chapter, "Under the Hood", talks about the various physical components as separate elements, but in reality many of these elements have now been integrated into one main chip. It's an important point to note when designing the hardware platform of a set-top box as the silicon often includes elements relating to the Conditional Access (CA) vendors.

Describing the functionality between ST Microelectronics, C-Cube and NEC chipsets would have been an interesting comparison. A reference table could have been included showing a selection of broadcasters and then a choice of CA, API and chip set suppliers cross referenced to the type of broadcast services offered.



John Lewis

how could anyone find
so much to write on the subject
of the humble set-top box

John Lewis

Although there are many common standards used in set-top boxes (DVB, MPEG, DOCSIS etc) and discussed in the book, the reality of the business is that every box design is unique to a service provider and cannot be used on other platforms even if they contain the same CA.

I would also have expected a lot more information describing the differences

between CA systems and their close relationship to middleware i.e. Mediaguard/Mediahighway from Canal+.

Although there is some reference to smart card technologies, a smart card is really only one part of the overall CA system which covers both hardware and software. Some examples of smart card software from Sun Microsystems, MasterCard, Visa and Microsoft are given. However, these are more suited to PC-based security systems rather than set-top boxes. An overview of the services offered by NDS, Canal+, Nagra and Irdeto would have been more useful.

A large part of the book is devoted to detailed descriptions of the various levels of software contained in a set-top box — everything from middleware and API's to Internet browsing, e-mails to server architecture. This should be treated as background reading as it's a bit heavy going at times. But it is still a useful reference.

It was good to see some mention of home networks included in the advanced features section. This is a very hot topic at the moment, even though it is still evolving into a workable solution. However, I doubt that there will be many consumers willing to lay new cables in their homes.

Our view is that the home network will be a wireless-based system, probably DECT initially, as this is cheap and well-proven in the cordless phone market. Bluetooth also is an interesting emerging standard that should have been discussed as it could well become a global standard as price and availability of the chip sets improves.

Overall, the book is a worthy addition to the bookshelf, written (I guess) by someone whose roots are in the computer industry rather than hands on experience of set-top box design. 

SUN TV already has a firm grip on the market for South Indian television programming, with four channels broadcasting in Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada. And it seems the network plans a repeat market-share-grabbing performance on the Internet with its one-year old Web site.

Taking into account India's still notoriously underdeveloped infrastructure, Sun TV online (www.sunttv.com) lays low on the funky flash animation. Yet it still manages to make the site easy on the eyes, not to mention the patience levels, with quickly loaded graphics and pictures.

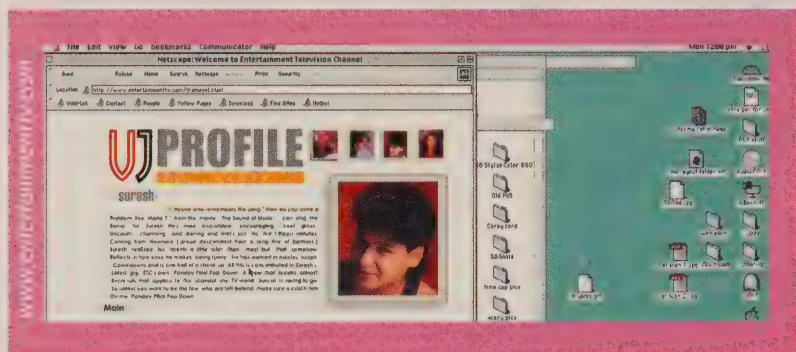
So far, the site seems to be targeting its existing TV viewers, essentially acting as an online programming guide for Sun TV India, Gemini TV, Udaya TV and Surya TV, with a few added perks. Ultimately though, if you don't have the ability to access the TV channel, there's not much to keep you here — at least not yet.

The news section has stickiness potential. The front page features a scrolling text box for international and local news, while the main news section features longer articles, weather information from across India and current affairs columns. At the time of

FULL frontal

India's Web masters are way ahead of the country's infrastructure. Never mind that, say some of the maharajahs of Indian satellite television as they launch full-on site building campaigns.

Mansha Daswani looks at the efforts of three local channels — Sun TV, Jain TV and ETC



this review, the section carried a piece on Sonia Gandhi and another on computer hacking.

Channel information features programming schedules and highlights. A nice touch is the remote control image, which allows you to browse programming by genre. Like the rest of the site, this section is for current TV viewers and is weak on value-added information. The only interesting bits are a few music and movie clips.

Particular emphasis has been paid to design and little Web details, especially in the section for Sun's international channels. Carried by Astro in Malaysia and Singapore CableVision in Singapore, the links open up those sites within the Sun TV window. For surfers, this minimises the

number of browser windows you have to keep open.

Still under construction, the section for New Millennium TV (found by clicking "live on the Web" on the homepage) is potentially the best part of Sun TV's online presence because it will offer a slew of Web-only NumTV channels, plus the live broadcast of Sun TV channels. The Num channels include Num Kids, Num Education, Num Movies and Num Music.

Technically a separate Web domain (www.numtv.com), Sun TV's designers have rigged it so that, again, you don't have to leave the site. This should boost its page views, undoubtedly a bonus when pitching to advertisers.

A Webcasting system, the NumTV page

provides all the information on the software and hardware required to view the online channels, a "help desk", and free registration.

Sun was the only company reviewed that is anywhere near approaching fulfilment of Internet-age customer-service expectations. A query sent to the general Sun TV e-mail address was responded to within the hour, which is still short of the 10-minute maximum response targets of some companies. In the meanwhile, the site also issues an automatic response as soon as it receives messages, acknowledging the speed potential of the medium.

Launched on: January 15, 1999

Designed by: Sun Network Web team

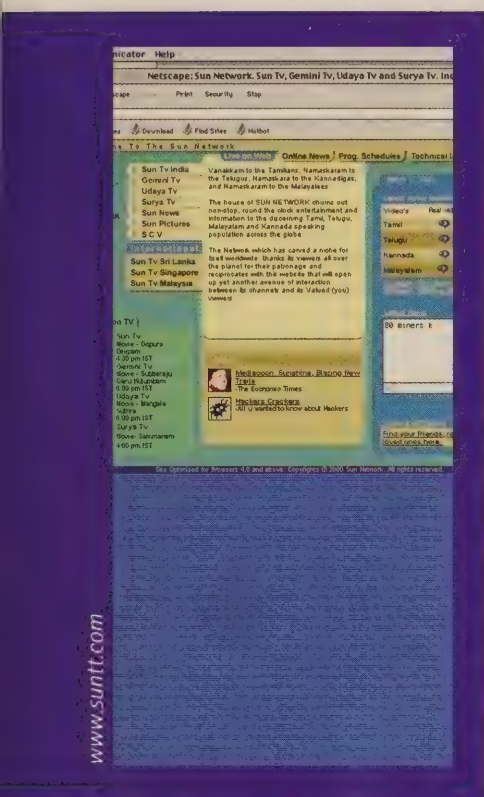
Final decision on content and design:

Managing director, Kalanithi Maran

Budget: Not disclosed

Page views: February 9-15, 2000: 29,569

MUCH of the world has already realised that the Y2K bug didn't have too much of a bite: if only someone would let the people at Jain TV know that. Well into February, the site (www.jaintv.com) was still harping on about the potentially devastating effects of the Y2K bug. There is also a countdown, which means either that Jain TV subscribes



which is still under construction, and an old newspaper article — taken from Hong Kong's *South China Morning Post*, although not credited as such — on Y2K babies. Quite apart from the fact that pinching someone else's copy in this way is called piracy, the story is from August last year — which is like the year zero in Internet terms — and has no relevance to India or Jain TV.

The Millennium poll also seems like a waste of time. The section asks visitors to the site to vote on people of the Millennium. Categories include, among others, "Indian lady", film personality and spiritual leader. There is no indication as to when the poll will close or when the results will be announced.

That's not the last of the criticisms on content, which continues to be all over the place. The strongest section is general news, which is divided into subject categories such as technology, politics, business and sports. It's not immediately clear what the source of this news is. The site also offers an e-mail news service. Entertainment, leisure and weather sections are still under construction. The horoscope section works, but the point of it in this very

anything, click on anything to go anywhere else, or get the T-shirt. It's possibly the first step on the business-to-consumer road, but right now it's stalled.

Other information includes a company profile, which is not very clear about Jain TV programming, an August 1999 press release on the site launch, contact details and a feedback section. Two e-mails sent to the site remained unanswered more than a week later.

Essentially, the site lacks a unique selling point. What can I find here that I can't find anywhere else? What can I buy here that I can't buy anywhere else? Who can I talk to here that I can't talk to anywhere else? The answers are nothing, nothing and no-one. There aren't even any schedules.

Jain seems to have portal ambitions with home page abilities, and the sooner it sorts out just what the Internet can do for its business, the sooner it will be able to make its contribution to the new global online community.

Launched on: no comment

Designed by: no comment

Final decision on content and design: no comment

Budget: no comment

Page views: no comment

Zee Television and Sony Entertainment TV (SET) have revamped their Web sites as their tussle for dominance continues. Zee has added a portal (www.zeenext.com) that acts as a gateway to the rest of the Zee online family (Asian Sky Shop, Zee TV, Premiere and Zee Education). Billing itself as "your .companion", the page features news from around the world and a vox pop, plus entertainment, travel and lifestyle features. More impressive are the ZeeNext services, which include free e-mail, RadioNext, with live music and news feeds, and Digisecy, an online personal planner.

SET, meanwhile (www.setindia.com), has gone mad on Shockwave Flash programming, with a new colourful and funky layout. In addition to the standard channel information, SETIndia.com has added sections on the AXN Action channel and a potentially entertaining "fun club". With screensavers and wallpaper from Hindi films, the site is a perfect destination for surfers who want to decorate their computer desktops with Bollywood paraphernalia. The Bollywood-themed e-cards would be great if they actually worked. At the time of this review though, attempts to send a card resulted in a "page not found" notice.

to the Arthur C. Clarke theory that the Millennium begins at the end of 2000. Or that the network is still running to catch up with the rest of the world who partied in the Millennium a few months ago.

There is even a Millennium contest,

confused site remains unclear.

Another odd inclusion is a section on Indian history and blurbs on key travel destinations in India and major cities around the world. What does this have to do with Jain TV? It's not like users can book

MUSIC channel ETC's Web site (www.entertainmenttv.com) is at the forefront of Web technology, with all the sexy flash animation that makes surfing fun. There are heaps of moving images, bright colours and a funky drum beat in the background. Unfortunately, you can't turn the music off until you exit, and the repeated banging is wearing.

Right now, however, it's not much more than a marketing tool (company info, advertising rates, schedules, channel profile, VJ data, satellite details, etc), with the hint of more. As such, its stickiness is limited. Coming are a music news section, which has the potential to draw in a wider audience of Web browsers.

The site's best quality is ultimately its only real drawback. For while the flashy images are great if you have a 56K modem, India's Internet highway may make this site, for Indian surfers at least, a chore to navigate.

Launched on: no comment

Designed by: no comment

Final decision on content and design: no comment

Budget: no comment

Page views: no comment

skywatch

who's who in geostationary orbit

INSAT-3B 74° EAST

Insat-3B looks set for launch aboard a Chinese Long March rocket in March. Built by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) in Bangalore, Insat-3B will carry 17 C-Band, six Ku-Band and three S-Band transponders. The spacecraft will weigh approximately 2,070 kg (4,554 lb) at lift off. The new capacity aboard Insat-3B will primarily be used to provide video, voice and data services for India's business community.

LMI-1 75° EAST

On January 25, Madagascar began broadcasting its domestic Malagasy TV service through LMI-1 under a 15-year contract with satellite operator, Lockheed Martin Intersputnik. Prior to its move to LMI-1, TV Malagasy had been broadcasting through transponder 9 on the Gorizont-38 satellite located at 53° E.

THAICOM-3 78.5° EAST

Thai-based satellite operator, Shin Satellite Public Company Ltd, has leased a global beam transponder to Television and Radio Broadcasting Services Australia Pty Ltd (TARBS). TARBS will use the capacity to broadcast up to eight digital television channels to Greek and Jewish communities in Australia. Thaicom-3's global beam offers a vast footprint that stretches from Western Europe to Australia and includes Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

Thai Internet Service Provider (ISP), C.S. Internet, has opened a gateway to the international Internet backbone via a satellite earth station located in Chiang Mai. The earth station connects to the fibre optic head end of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) through global beam capacity on Thaicom-3.

Thailand's first direct provincial link to the international Internet backbone is part of the company's long-term strategic plan for setting up a national distribution network that will be more resilient to single point failure. The company expects to set up regional connections in seven to eight of the Kingdom's most populous provinces.

EXPRESS-6A 80° EAST

International satellite operator, Intersputnik, has announced the forthcoming launch of Express-6A. The satellite will carry 12 C-Band transponders and five high-power Ku-Band transponders. The C-Band capacity will primarily be used to accommodate high-speed Internet access links from Europe to the Middle East and Africa, while the Ku-Band capacity will deliver a new digital DTH bouquet on behalf of the Russian Satellite Communications Company.

Express-6A is the second in the Express-A satellite series. The initial spacecraft was destroyed in a Proton launch accident last October. Russia's NPO-PM built the Express-A satellite bus, while Alcatel Espace of France supplied the communications payload.

ASIASAT-3S 105.5° EAST

Sahara TV has leased one of AsiaSat-3S' 36-MHz-wide C-Band transponders. Sahara TV intends to use the capacity to launch an analogue free-to-air variety entertainment channel beginning in March. The new entertainment channel will broadcast serials, game shows, debates, talk shows, soap operas and news programmes. Sahara TV is the broadcasting arm of Indian conglomerate, Sahara India Pariwar.

AsiaSat was one of 12 successful applicants recently licensed by the Hong Kong government to operate satellite-based external fixed-line telecommunications gateways. This will allow the satellite service provider's customers to bypass the undersea cable gateway owned by Cable & Wireless HKT and hook up directly with other international telecom networks around the world.

PALAPA-C2 113° EAST

PT Satelit Palapa Indonesia (Satelindo), operator of the Palapa-C2 satellite, recently revealed its plans to launch a new Satelindo Digital Bouquet that will be an open and neutral technical platform based on DVB compliant hardware and software. The bouquet will enable service and

content providers to distribute rapidly and cost-effectively video and data content via Palapa-C2 directly to PCs or set-top boxes. The new service will be launched later this year.

The company has also renamed its Telecast Service programme "Asia Link" to reflect its goal of becoming a major handler of live TV broadcast events within the region. In addition to using Palapa-C2, Asia Link will link up with other satellites around the globe to provide a complete end-to-end service. Asia Link also has its own mobile earth station, which customers can use to originate live broadcasts from sites within the Indonesian archipelago.

SUPERBIRD-4 162° EAST

On February 17, an Ariane 44LP rocket launched the 4.1 tonne Superbird-4 satellite into orbit from the European Space Agency launch centre in Kourou, French Guiana. Owned by Japan's Space Communications Corporation (SCC), Superbird-4 is expected to replace Superbird-A at 162° E. The cost of the satellite, launch and insurance has been estimated at more than US\$250 million.

Superbird-4 carries 23 active Ku-Band transponders equipped with 80-watt amplifiers and six Ka-Band transponders powered by 50-watt amplifiers. The new Ka-Band capacity will be used to support broadband and high-speed data services. In addition to its fixed Ku-Band and Ka-Band antennas, Superbird-4 carries a Ku-Band spot beam that can be steered by ground command to cover areas outside the satellite's primary footprints. Superbird-4 is expected to achieve a mission lifetime in excess of 15 years.

INTELSAT-VII 178° EAST

Intelsat is purchasing two new Intelsat-IX spacecrafts for service in the Atlantic Ocean Region in order to free up two Intelsat-VII satellites already in orbit, one of which will eventually be relocated to the Pacific Ocean Region. This will allow Intelsat to establish a new orbital location for customers in the Pacific by year-end 2003.

INTELSAT-701 180° EAST

French government media organisation, RFO, plans to establish a multi-national, multi-lingual satellite TV service for the South Pacific by next year. A similar service for the Indian Ocean Region was launched late last year. RFO already broadcasts one digital TV service through Intelsat-701.

RFO's regional plan calls for the participation of non-French countries and territories in the South Pacific. The plan is contingent upon RFO negotiating international programming rights and attracting regional partners that can contribute financially to the project.

ZHONGXING-22

China recently launched a 5,000 lb communications satellite, Zhongxing-22, using one of its biggest rockets, the Long March 3A, according to the Xinhua General News Service. The orbital assignment has not yet been announced. The Chinese have many possible registered slots. Industry bets are that they may use 87.5° E, although this has not been confirmed.

Beijing-based China Telecommunications and Broadcasting Satellite Corporation (ChinaSat) will own and operate the new spacecraft, which will be used to provide domestic telecommunications services on the Chinese mainland.

ChinaSat is a state-owned enterprise under the supervision of the Ministry of Information Industry. It also is one of the original seven shareholders of APT Satellite International (APT) — the operator of the Apstar satellite system. ChinaSat recently increased its APT holdings to a two-seventh interest through the acquisition of shares previously held by China Satellite Launch & Tracking Control General.

The launch of Zhongxing-22 was the fourth for the Chinese Long March 3A since its inaugural flight six years ago. Long March 3A will be used again next year to deploy an Italian telecommunications satellite — its first international deployment.

GARUDA-1

On February 12, a Russian Proton rocket

launched the new Garuda-1 mobile telecommunications satellite from Kazakhstan's Baikonur cosmodrome on behalf of Indonesia's P.T. Pasifik Satelit Nusantara (PSN). This was the first Proton to blast off from the Baikonur cosmodrome since last October, when another Proton rocket failed shortly after takeoff, showering nearby areas with fragments from the launch vehicle and accompanying Express-A satellite.

The Garuda orbital position has not been publicly disclosed.

Garuda-1 will allow PSN to offer the first satellite-based, handheld mobile telecommunications services in the Asia-Pacific region through its ASIA Cellular Satellite (ACeS) mobile satellite telephony system. ACeS will offer dual mode (satellite - GSM 900) voice, data, Internet services and global roaming capability.

ACeS is co-owned by PSN, Lockheed Martin Global Telecommunications, Philippines Long Distance Telephone (PLDT) and Thailand's Jasmine International.

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FOCUS ON... AGILA-II

THE Mabuhay Philippines Satellite Corporation (MPSC) was established in 1994 as the result of efforts by a multinational joint venture composed of telecommunications and broadcast companies based in the Philippines, Indonesia and China. Participants included the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company (PLDT), High Rise Realty Development Corporation, Pilipino Telephone Corp (Piltel), Beijing High Den Enterprises Limited, Walden Group of Companies, GMA Network Inc, Philippine Satellite Corporation (PSC), Cable Entertainment Corporation (CEC), Siy Yap Group (SYG) and Philippine Communications Satellite Corporation (PCSC).

The company's Agila-II satellite system cost an estimated US\$243 million to implement. Agila-II is a high-power communications spacecraft with a design based on the Space Systems/Loral FS-1300 satellite bus. This spacecraft had an electrical capacity of more than nine kilowatts at launch and is expected to produce an estimated 8.2 kilowatts at its end of life. This makes it one of the most powerful communication satellites ever launched into space. Deployed by a Chinese Long March 3B rocket on August 20, 1997, Agila-II is expected to achieve a mission lifetime of more than 15 years.

Agila-II carries 30 C-Band transponders with 27-watt amplifiers and 24 Ku-Band transponders with 110-watt amplifiers — more than enough capacity to relay 50,000 simultaneous two-way telephone conversations and 190 channels of digital TV programming.

The satellite's C-Band coverage includes Bangladesh, China, the Hawaiian islands, India, Japan, Pakistan, the Philippines and Southeast Asia, while the Ku-Band coverage encompasses Taiwan, portions of mainland China and Vietnam, as well as the entire Philippines archipelago. The Ku-Band transponders may also be commanded by ground control to combine into 12 high-powered transponders with 220-watt amplifiers for broadcasting direct-to-home (DTH) digital TV services.

The spacecraft is located at 146° E. Satellite control and management facilities are based in the MPSC Space Center in the Subic Bay Freeport Zone.

Agila-II's C-Band capacity is used by PLDT and Piltel for additional trunk circuits, as well as for the relay of trans-Pacific traffic. PSN of Indonesia controls two C-Band transponders, which are

primarily used to implement its VSAT solutions for the region's business community.

The C-Band capacity also empowers personal and corporate users with sophisticated voice and data facilities that can even permit Internet access with downlink capabilities of up to 15 Mbit/s. Filipino broadcasters, such as ABS-CBN and GMA Rainbow Network, also use the satellite's C-Band capacity for signal distribution and satellite news gathering.

Agila-II's Ku-Band capacity delivers DTH broadcast services to Filipinos in remote areas. This allows rural dish owners to receive high-quality programming previously available only to certain parts of the country via wire and cable facilities.

Manuel V. Pangilinan, CEO of MPSC, recently announced that the company is expecting to break even this year and begin showing a profit by the end of next year. Headed by a new management team, the company expects increased demand for Internet services to fuel future growth.

The outlook was not so rosy in early 1998, when MPSC was forced to relocate its Agila-II satellite. At the time, a spokesman for the operator characterised the move as a voluntary effort to help allay concerns from Space Communications Corporation (SCC) about possible interference between Agila-II and SCC's Superbird-C. Prior to Agila-II's relocation, both spacecraft had been located at 144° E.

Agila-II and Superbird-C both carry Ku-Band transponders that operate within the same frequency spectrum. This makes it virtually impossible for the satellites to share the same orbital location without causing interference to each other. Moreover, Agila-II's relocation did not entirely eliminate it as a potential source of interference to Superbird-C. The problem was finally resolved through a coordination agreement reached between the two satellite operators. This agreement undoubtedly includes some restrictions involving MPSC's operation of Agila-II's Ku-Band payload, which reduces the satellite's revenue generating abilities.

By 1998, the currency crisis that swept through Southeast Asia had also exacted its toll, forcing MPSC to suspend plans to launch a new Agila-III communications satellite before 2000.

Agila-III would have provided new regional services, while Agila-II would have continued to serve the domestic

Philippine market. If MPSC turns the corner to new profits by next year, we can expect a revival of its plans for a follow-on satellite to handle increased demand for multimedia services in the region.

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MPSC Satellite Control Center
Group V, Naval Magazine
Subic Bay Freeport Zone, 2222
Olongapo City, Philippines
Telephone: (63 47) 252 9004
Fax: (63 47) 252 9002

AGILA-II SATELLITE SPECIFICATIONS

Spacecraft Model: Space Systems/Loral FS 1300

Expected Operational Life: 15.3 Years

Geostationary Orbital Position: 146° E

Communications Payload:

C-band:

Number of Transponders: 24 Standard C;
6 Extended C

Frequency Band:

Uplink - 5925 to 6725 MHz

Downlink - 3560 to 4200 MHz

Transponder Bandwidth: 36 MHz

Uplink/Downlink Polarisation: Dual Linear
Orthogonal

Coverage: Asia, from India to Philippines
Japan to Indonesia; plus spot beam
coverage of Hawaii

EIRP:

Main Beam: +37 dBW (Edge of coverage)

Spot Beam: +35 dBW

TWTA Power: 27 watts

TWTA Redundancy: 2 Groups, 19 for 15

Ku-Band:

Number of Transponders: 24

Frequency Band:

Uplink - 14000 to 14500 MHz

Downlink - 12200 to 12700 MHz

Transponder Bandwidth: 36 MHz

Uplink/Downlink Polarisation: Dual Linear
Orthogonal

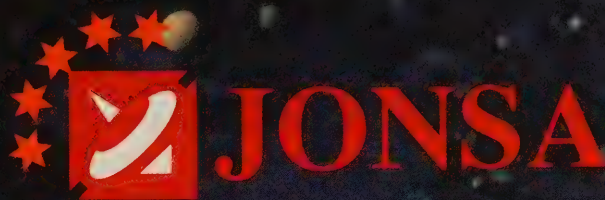
Coverage: Philippines, Coastal China,
Vietnam, Taiwan and Hong Kong

EIRP: 55 dBW

TWTA Power: 110 watts

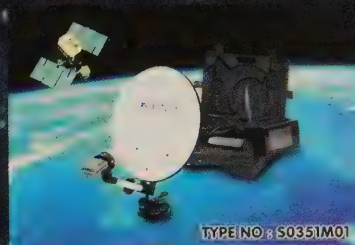
TWTA Redundancy: 2 Groups, 16 for 12

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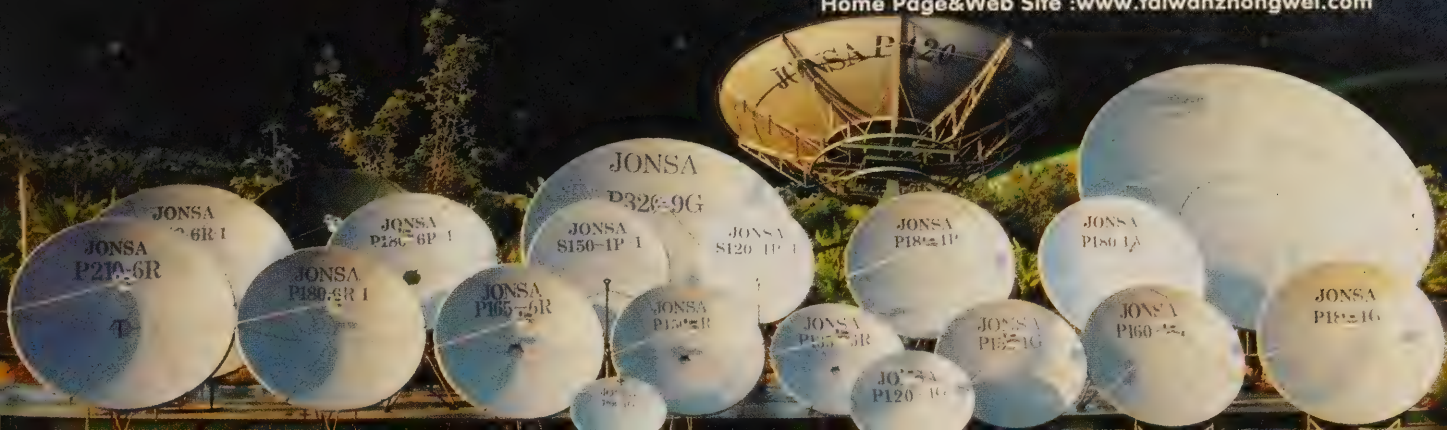
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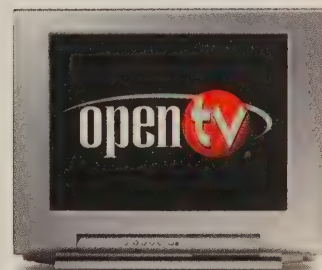
what's on satellite over Asia

Satellite TV/Radio Channel Name	Tpr. No.	Frequency (in GHz)	Pol.	TV Standard (Analogue/Digital)	Subcarrier (in MHz)	Pre-empt Symbol Rate	Audio Notes FEC Rate
INSAT-20T 55°E							
DD p/v	6	3811	LH	PAL-clear	5.5	75 uS	Associated mono
DD a/v	12	3922	LH	PAL-clear	5.5	75 uS	Associated mono
DD a/v	24	4144	LH	PAL-clear	5.5	75 uS	Associated mono
INTELSAT-703 57°E							
Sun TV	21H	3750	RH	PAL-clear	6.3/6.6	75 uS	Associated mono (Tamil)
Udaya TV	22H	3805	LH	PAL-clear	6.3/6.6	75 uS	Associated mono (Kannada)
Surya TV	24H	3950	RH				Associated mono (Malayalam)
Worldnet	35G	4055	RH	PAL-clear	6.65	75 uS	Associated mono
MTA	39G	4177	LH	PAL-clear	6.5	75 uS	Associated mono (Arabic)
TV	107S	4140	LH	PAL-clear	6.5	75 uS	Associated mono
PAS-4 66.5°E							
BBC World	1	3785	V	BMAC-PAL	6.8/7.2	75 uS	Associated mono
Discovery	4C	3785	V	BMAC-PAL	6.8	75 uS	Associated mono
BBC World	6C	3825	V	PAL-clear	6.5	75 uS	Associated mono
Home TV	4C	3840	V	PAL-clear	6.5	75 uS	Associated mono
ESPN	5C	3855	H	BMAC-PAL	7.2	75 uS	Associated mono
Sony TV	7C	3910	H	PAL-clear	6.5	75 uS	Associated mono
Sima-T	7C	3930	H	PAL-clear	6.5	75 uS	Associated mono
CNN	13C	4055	H	PAL-clear	6.8	75 uS	Associated mono
Cartoon Network	13C	4115	H	PAL-clear	6.8	75 uS	Associated mono
TNT	13C	4115	H	PAL-clear	6.8	75 uS	Associated mono
MTV India	16C	4175	V	PAL-clear	7.55/7.75	75 uS	Associated mono
NHK	20K	4205	V	NTSC-Letsh	6.8/7.5	75 uS	Associated mono
APSTAR-2R 76.5°E							
TV	1	3785	V	BMAC-PAL	6.8/7.2	75 uS	Associated mono
Discovery	4C	3785	V	BMAC-PAL	6.8	75 uS	Associated mono
BBC World	6C	3825	V	PAL-clear	6.5	75 uS	Associated mono
Home TV	4C	3840	V	PAL-clear	6.5	75 uS	Associated mono
ESPN	5C	3855	H	BMAC-PAL	7.2	75 uS	Associated mono
Sony TV	7C	3910	H	PAL-clear	6.5	75 uS	Associated mono
Sima-T	7C	3930	H	PAL-clear	6.5	75 uS	Associated mono
CNN	13C	4055	H	PAL-clear	6.8	75 uS	Associated mono
Cartoon Network	13C	4115	H	PAL-clear	6.8	75 uS	Associated mono
TNT	13C	4115	H	PAL-clear	6.8	75 uS	Associated mono
MTV India	16C	4175	V	PAL-clear	7.55/7.75	75 uS	Associated mono
NHK	20K	4205	V	NTSC-Letsh	6.8/7.5	75 uS	Associated mono
THAICOM-2/3 78.5°E							
TV	1	3785	V	BMAC-PAL	6.8/7.2	75 uS	Associated mono
Discovery	4C	3785	V	BMAC-PAL	6.8	75 uS	Associated mono
BBC World	6C	3825	V	PAL-clear	6.5	75 uS	Associated mono
Home TV	4C	3840	V	PAL-clear	6.5	75 uS	Associated mono
ESPN	5C	3855	H	BMAC-PAL	7.2	75 uS	Associated mono
Sony TV	7C	3910	H	PAL-clear	6.5	75 uS	Associated mono
Sima-T	7C	3930	H	PAL-clear	6.5	75 uS	Associated mono
CNN	13C	4055	H	PAL-clear	6.8	75 uS	Associated mono
Cartoon Network	13C	4115	H	PAL-clear	6.8	75 uS	Associated mono
TNT	13C	4115	H	PAL-clear	6.8	75 uS	Associated mono
MTV India	16C	4175	V	PAL-clear	7.55/7.75	75 uS	Associated mono
NHK	20K	4205	V	NTSC-Letsh	6.8/7.5	75 uS	Associated mono



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Satellite TV/Radio Channel Name	Tpr. No.	Frequency (in GHz)	Pol.	TV Standard (Analogue/Digital)	Subcarrier (in MHz)	Pre-emp Symbol Rate	Audio Notes
ChinaSat-6B/AsiaSat-6A Radio Channel Radio Type				DTG			
Shanghai Oriental TV	6C	12384	H	MPEG-2 clear		5.250 Mbps/sec	REC-12 QPSK
Shanghai Provincial TV	6C	12384	H	MPEG-2 clear		5.250 Mbps/sec	REC-12 QPSK
Shanghai Municipal TV	6C	12384	H	MPEG-2 clear		5.250 Mbps/sec	REC-12 QPSK
Shanghai Municipal TV	6C	12384	H	MPEG-2 clear		5.250 Mbps/sec	REC-12 QPSK
PRC State Administration of Radio, Film & TV	88	12486.5	H	NTSC-clear	5.60/7.28/8.065		
ASIATAT-3S 106.5°E							
Alpha TV Macau	1V	3660	V	PAL			
CETV	2H	3660	H	PAL			
Amos TV	3H	3750 (H)	V	MPEG-2 DVB-ETC		1.5 Mbps/sec	REC-12 QPSK
Pacific Communications TV	4H	3760	H	PAL			
Network of the World	1V	3780	V	MPEG-2 DVB-ETC		1.5 Mbps/sec	REC-12 QPSK
Star TV	1V	3780	V	MPEG-2 DVB-ETC		1.5 Mbps/sec	REC-12 QPSK
STAR Asia (Asia Channel TV) (Hindi)							
STAR Movies India (STAR Movies India)							
StarNet (Singapore) (Singapore) (Hindi) (Hindi)							
STAR Sports Asia (STAR Movies 1)							
STAR Movies 1							
STAR Sports Asia	5H	3800	H	NTSC-M		5.58 5.75 5.94 6.20 6.30 6.48 6.60	Mandarin Panda Left Mandarin Panda Right English Panda Mandarin Conventional Mandarin Panda Left Mandarin Panda Right Conventional Mandarin
Channel (V) (North Asia)	6H	3840	H	NTSC-M		5.58 5.75 5.94 6.20 6.30 6.48 6.60	Mandarin Panda Left Mandarin Panda Right English Panda Mandarin Conventional Mandarin Panda Left Mandarin Panda Right Conventional Mandarin
STAR Asia (Asia Channel TV) (Hindi)							
STAR Movies India (STAR Movies India)							
StarNet (Singapore) (Singapore) (Hindi) (Hindi)							
STAR Sports Asia (STAR Movies 1)							
STAR Movies 1							
STAR Sports Asia	5H	3800	H	NTSC-M		5.58 5.75 5.94 6.20 6.30 6.48 6.60	Mandarin Panda Left Mandarin Panda Right English Panda Mandarin Conventional Mandarin Panda Left Mandarin Panda Right Conventional Mandarin
Channel (V) (North Asia)	6H	3840	H	NTSC-M		5.58 5.75 5.94 6.20 6.30 6.48 6.60	Mandarin Panda Left Mandarin Panda Right English Panda Mandarin Conventional Mandarin Panda Left Mandarin Panda Right Conventional Mandarin
STAR Asia (Asia Channel TV) (Hindi)							
STAR Movies India (STAR Movies India)							
StarNet (Singapore) (Singapore) (Hindi) (Hindi)							
STAR Sports Asia (STAR Movies 1)							
STAR Movies 1							
STAR Sports Asia	5H	3800	H	NTSC-M		5.58 5.75 5.94 6.20 6.30 6.48 6.60	Mandarin Panda Left Mandarin Panda Right English Panda Mandarin Conventional Mandarin Panda Left Mandarin Panda Right Conventional Mandarin
Channel (V) (North Asia)	6H	3840	H	NTSC-M		5.58 5.75 5.94 6.20 6.30 6.48 6.60	Mandarin Panda Left Mandarin Panda Right English Panda Mandarin Conventional Mandarin Panda Left Mandarin Panda Right Conventional Mandarin
STAR Asia (Asia Channel TV) (Hindi)							
STAR Movies India (STAR Movies India)							
StarNet (Singapore) (Singapore) (Hindi) (Hindi)							
STAR Sports Asia (STAR Movies 1)							
STAR Movies 1							
STAR Sports Asia	5H	3800	H	NTSC-M		5.58 5.75 5.94 6.20 6.30 6.48 6.60	Mandarin Panda Left Mandarin Panda Right English Panda Mandarin Conventional Mandarin Panda Left Mandarin Panda Right Conventional Mandarin
Channel (V) (North Asia)	6H	3840	H	NTSC-M		5.58 5.75 5.94 6.20 6.30 6.48 6.60	Mandarin Panda Left Mandarin Panda Right English Panda Mandarin Conventional Mandarin Panda Left Mandarin Panda Right Conventional Mandarin
STAR Asia (Asia Channel TV) (Hindi)							
STAR Movies India (STAR Movies India)							
StarNet (Singapore) (Singapore) (Hindi) (Hindi)							
STAR Sports Asia (STAR Movies 1)							
STAR Movies 1							
STAR Sports Asia	5H	3800	H	NTSC-M		5.58 5.75 5.94 6.20 6.30 6.48 6.60	Mandarin Panda Left Mandarin Panda Right English Panda Mandarin Conventional Mandarin Panda Left Mandarin Panda Right Conventional Mandarin
Channel (V) (North Asia)	6H	3840	H	NTSC-M		5.58 5.75 5.94 6.20 6.30 6.48 6.60	Mandarin Panda Left Mandarin Panda Right English Panda Mandarin Conventional Mandarin Panda Left Mandarin Panda Right Conventional Mandarin
STAR Asia (Asia Channel TV) (Hindi)							
STAR Movies India (STAR Movies India)							
StarNet (Singapore) (Singapore) (Hindi) (Hindi)							
STAR Sports Asia (STAR Movies 1)							
STAR Movies 1							
STAR Sports Asia	5H	3800	H	NTSC-M		5.58 5.75 5.94 6.20 6.30 6.48 6.60	Mandarin Panda Left Mandarin Panda Right English Panda Mandarin Conventional Mandarin Panda Left Mandarin Panda Right Conventional Mandarin
Channel (V) (North Asia)	6H	3840	H	NTSC-M		5.58 5.75 5.94 6.20 6.30 6.48 6.60	Mandarin Panda Left Mandarin Panda Right English Panda Mandarin Conventional Mandarin Panda Left Mand

Satellite TV/Radio Channel Name	Tpr. No.	Frequency (in GHz)	Pol.	TV Standard (Analog/Digital)	Subcarrier (in MHz)	Pre-emp Symbol Rate	Audio Notes FEC Rate
ATV	5H	3850	H	PAL-clear	6.8 5.90/7.2	75 uS 75 uS 75 uS	Associated mono Radio mono Associated mono
PTV-4	6H	3938	H	Digicopter	6.3	75 uS	CNN Radio
CNN	7V	3950	V	PAL-clear	6.8	75 uS	Associated mono
CNBC	8H	4040	H	PAL-clear	6.8	75 uS	Associated mono
Indo Asia	9V	4074	V	MPEG-2	6.8	6.7 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
MTV	11H	4120	H	PAL-clear	6.3	75 uS	Associated mono
RTB	11V	4140	V	PAL-clear	7.35/7.75	75 uS	Associated stereo
SITV	11V	4140	V	PAL-clear	6.8	75 uS	Associated mono
TV-5 Asia	12H	4160	H	PAL-clear	5.8/5.6	75 uS	Associated mono
BFI Radio	12H	4160	H R	PAL-clear	7.2/8.0	75 uS	Radio
TPN	12V	4160	V	MPEG-2	6.7	6.7 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
Sinag TV (Taiwan)	KLL	10.670	V	MPEG-2	21.045	Msym/sec	FEC-5/6 QPSK
APSTAR-1A 134°E							
Zhejiang TV	4A	3760	H	PAL-clear	6.5	75 uS	Associated mono
News TV	5B	3770	V	MPEG-2	6.8	6.8 Msym/sec	FEC-7/8 QPSK
(Overseas) TV	5B	3780	V	MPEG-2	6.8	6.8 Msym/sec	FEC-7/8 QPSK
IRIB - ARS	7V	3800	V	MPEG-2	6.5	6.5 Msym/sec	FEC-1/3 QPSK
CCTV-1	9V	3800	V	PAL-clear	6.5	75 uS	Associated mono
CCTV-2	5V	3800	V	PAL-clear	6.5	75 uS	Associated mono
Guizhou TV	9A	3800	H	PAL-clear	6.5	75 uS	Associated mono
CCTV-1	TV	3850	V	PAL-clear	6.5	75 uS	Associated mono
QIN	8A	3850	H	MPEG-2	6.8	6.8 Msym/sec	FEC-7/8 QPSK
Yunnan Guizhou TV	8H	4000	H	PAL-clear	6.5	75 uS	Associated mono
Zhejiang TV	8V	4020	V	PAL-clear	6.5	75 uS	Associated mono
Sichuan TV	10H	4050	H	PAL-clear	6.5	75 uS	Associated mono
Shandong TV	10V	4100	V	PAL-clear	6.5	75 uS	Associated mono
Xinjiang TV	11H	4120	H	MPEG-2	6.8	6.8 Msym/sec	FEC-7/8 QPSK
CCTV-3	12H	4160	H	PAL-clear	6.5	75 uS	Associated mono
CCTV-2	12V	4180	V	PAL-clear	6.5	75 uS	Associated mono
AGUIA-2 146°E							
Ngelal Oceanic	KL	12801	H	MPEG-2	6.8	6.8 Msym/sec	FEC-7/8 QPSK
GMA Rainbow Network	KL	3767	H	NTSC-clear	6.8	6.8 Msym/sec	Associated mono
PA5-3 166°E							
CNN	4C	3785	V	NTSC-clear	6.8	6.8 Msym/sec	Associated mono
CNN Radio	4C	3785	V	NTSC-clear	6.3	6.3 Msym/sec	Radio
Golf Channel, EWTN	12C	3840	H	NTSC-clear	6.8	27.686 Msym/sec	FEC-7/8 QPSK
NHK, NHK World,	16C	4050	H	NTSC-clear	6.8	26.470 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
NHK Premium, Radio Japan	16C	4050	H	NTSC-clear	6.8	26.470 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
PTV Manila	120C	3800	V	MPEG-2/DVB	6.8	30.170 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
Fashion TV	120C	3800	V	MPEG-2/DVB	6.8	30.170 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
MCM Asia	120C	3800	V	MPEG-2/DVB	6.8	30.170 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
CNN International	120C	3800	V	MPEG-2/DVB	6.8	30.170 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
Deutsche Welle	120C	3800	V	MPEG-2/DVB	6.8	30.170 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
Global World	120C	3800	V	MPEG-2/DVB	6.8	30.170 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
Bloomberg TV	120C	3800	V	MPEG-2/DVB	6.8	30.170 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
Habermag, Kenral Channel	120C	3800	V	MPEG-2/DVB	6.8	30.170 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
Sun TV	120C	3800	V	MPEG-2/DVB	6.8	30.170 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
PA5-2 168°E							
CCTV-1	1C	3716	V	NTSC-BMAC	6.8	19.650 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
LBC, ART, ART Movies,	2C	3743	H	NTSC-BMAC	6.8	19.465 Msym/sec	FEC-7/8 QPSK
Jordan TV, CNBC USA	2C	3775	H	NTSC-BMAC	6.8	19.465 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
Discovery Channel	2C	3775	H	NTSC-BMAC	6.8	19.465 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
Taiwan, SC, AM, Japan, Australia, Asia, Europe, Africa	2C	3775	H	NTSC-BMAC	6.8	19.465 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
MTV Asia	3C	3805	V	NTSC-BMAC	6.8	19.465 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
ESPN Channel	5C	3805	V	NTSC-BMAC	6.8	19.465 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
Animal Planet	8C	3805	V	NTSC-BMAC	6.8	19.465 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
TNT & Cartoon Network	9C	3835	V	NTSC-BMAC	6.8	19.465 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
Global Communications	10C	3957	H	NTSC-BMAC	6.8	19.465 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
JST Bollywood	5C	3805	V	NTSC-BMAC	6.8	19.465 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
NHK World TV/Prism	12C	4035	H	NTSC-BMAC	6.8	19.465 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
National Geographic	13C	4035	V	NTSC-BMAC	6.8	19.465 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
TNT & Cartoon Network	15C	4165	V	NTSC-BMAC	6.8	19.465 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
ABC MITE	13C	4103	V	NTSC-BMAC	6.8	19.465 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
ABC AT	13C	4103	V	NTSC-BMAC	6.8	19.465 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
TARBS	125C	12525	H	MPEG-2/DVB	6.8	28.068 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
TeleAsia, MCM Asia	125C	12525	H	MPEG-2/DVB	6.8	28.068 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
Egyptian TV, TNT & Cartoon Network	125C	12525	H	MPEG-2/DVB	6.8	28.068 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
CNN International, Night Moves	125C	12525	H	MPEG-2/DVB	6.8	28.068 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
Arabian Channel	125C	12525	H	MPEG-2/DVB	6.8	28.068 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
Melbourne Vizion	125C	12525	V	MPEG-2/DVB	6.8	28.068 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
MTV	125C	12525	V	MPEG-2/DVB	6.8	28.068 Msym/sec	FEC-3/4 QPSK
Future TV Australia	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available

2000 CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION DIARY

March 1-3

Digital TV In Asia — Developing Strategies To Launch Digital TV
Grand Copthorne, Singapore
Contact: IQPC Worldwide
Tel: (65) 325 6330
Fax: (65) 224 2515
e-mail: enquire@iqpc.com.sg

March 22-24

China Cable Broadcasting Network 2000
China International Exhibition Center, Beijing, China
Contact: Dong Zhen or Wang Huimin, Academy of Broadcasting Sciences
Tel: (8610) 6609 1340/3977/1272
Fax: (8610) 6609 1277
e-mail: catvshow@china.com
Web: www.sarft.gov.cn

March 30-31

Internet Marketing
Regal Hong Kong Hotel, Hong Kong
Contact: Asia Business Forum
Tel: (852) 2804 1901
Fax: (852) 2528 1167
Web: www.abf-asia.com

March 31-April 1

Sino-US Conference on Cable TV Management
Shangrila Hotel, Beijing, China
Contact: Encore International
Tel: (1 303) 267 5848
Fax: (1 303) 267 4099

April 5-7

Philippines Cable Show 2000
Waterfront Hotel, Cebu City, Philippines
Contact: Worldexco
Tel: (632) 834 2404
Fax: (632) 834 0602
e-mail: wdx@info.com.ph
Web: www.pcta.org.ph

June 6-9

BroadcastAsia2000/CableSat2000
Singapore Expo, Singapore
Contact: Singapore Exhibition Services
Tel: (65) 738 6776
Fax: (65) 732 6776
e-mail: info@sesmontnet.com
Web: www.sesmontnet.com

June 28-30

Filmart 2000 — Hong Kong International Film and TV Market
Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, Hong Kong
Contact: Hong Kong Trade Development Council
For enquiries from Southeast Asia, Korea and Japan: Irene Ho
Tel: (852) 2584 4397
e-mail: irene.ho@tdc.org.hk
Other countries: Christine Leung
Tel: (852) 2584 4261
e-mail: christine.leung@tdc.org.hk
Fax: (852) 2824 0249, 2511 1835
Web: hkfilmart.tdc.org.hk

June 29-July 1

The Digital Millennium:
Opportunities for Asian Media
Singapore
Contact: AMIC
Tel: (65) 792 7570
Fax: (65) 792 7129
Web: www.amic.org.sg

August 27-30

DSLcon Asia (Digital Subscriber Line)
Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre, Hong Kong
Contact: Sheri Turner-Weber, DSLcon
Tel: (1 408) 778 1994
Fax: (1 408) 778 7078
e-mail: sweber@dslcon.com
Web: www.dslcon.com
Confex Partners Ltd
Tel: (1 978) 371 1792
Fax: (1 978) 369 2036
e-mail: berndtson@aol.com

September 27-29

Taipei Satellite & Cable 2000
Taipei, Taiwan
Contact: Vicky Tu
Tel: (886 2) 2778 5818
Fax: (886 2) 2778 2442
e-mail: catvshow@ms29.hinet.net

October 17-21

Broadcast India 2000
World Trade Centre, Mumbai, India
Contact: Saicom Trade Fairs & Exhibitions
Tel: (91 22) 215 1396, 215 2721
Fax: (91 22) 215 1269
e-mail: saicom@bom2.vsnl.net.in
Web: www.saicom.com

October 21-29

Shanghai TV Festival
Shanghai, China
Contact: Shanghai TV Festival
Tel: (86 21) 6267 6183
Fax: (86 21) 6255 2000
e-mail: stvf@public.sta.net.cn

November 7-9

Asia-Pacific Satellite Communications Council Conference and Exhibition — New Vision for Satellite Communication in the 21st Century
Hotel Lotte World, Seoul, South Korea
Contact: APSCC Secretariat
Tel: (82 2) 563 4943, 508 4883-5
Fax: (82 2) 568 8593
e-mail: apscc@chollian.net
Web: www.apscc.or.kr

November 8-10

SCaT India 2000
Mumbai, India
Contact: SCaT India
Tel: (91 22) 494 8280
Fax: (91 22) 496 3465
e-mail: scat@pobox.com
Web: www.scatindia.com

November 15-17

Casbaa 2000
Singapore
Tel: (852) 2854 9913
Fax: (852) 2854 9530
Web: www.casbaa.org

December 5-7

China TeleSports 2000 — China Televised Sports International Exhibition and Conference 2000
International Convention Centre, Beijing, China
Contact: China Exhibitions Limited
Tel: (44 1600) 860 864
Fax: (44 1600) 860 570
e-mail: sales@chinatrade.co.uk
Web: www.chinatrade.co.uk

December 5-8

MIP Asia 2000
Singapore Convention and Exhibition Centre, Singapore
Contact: MIP Asia
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Web: www.mipasia.com

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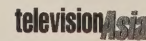
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"My dream is to create another Sony."

Pacific Century CyberWorks (PCCW) boss and Star TV founder, 33-year-old Richard Li, after his successful US\$35.9 billion bid for a controlling stake of Hong Kong's dominant telecommunications company, Cable & Wireless HKT. (South China Morning Post (SCMP), Hong Kong)

"It was simply the better bid."

The UK's Cable & Wireless chief executive, Graham Wallace, on the company's decision to accept Li's offer over that of Singapore's government-controlled Singapore Telecom. All involved have denied any interference from governments in Hong Kong or Beijing. (SCMP)

"With or without the relationship as father and son, I think it's natural for Mr Li [senior] to voice his support for the CyberWorks acquisition, because it's good for Hong Kong."

Bank of China general manager, Liu Jinbao, on the alleged request by Richard Li's father, tycoon Li Ka-shing, for the bank to approve the loan financing deal for the PCCW bid. (SCMP)

"Mr Li has never asked [the bank] to lend money to CyberWorks."

A spokesman for Li Ka-shing's Cheung Kong (Holdings). The Li family is said to be the 10th richest family in the world. (SCMP)

"He wants to be the biggest in Hong Kong — he doesn't want people to call him the second son of Li Ka-shing."

A Richard Li associate the day after the C&W HKT deal was done. (SCMP)

"He's very aggressive... a lot of women end up crying, the way he screams at them... He rewards them quite well, but he's very demanding."

Unidentified source on Richard Li's management style. (SCMP)



"The world has changed totally since the AOL/Time Warner takeover... A lot of us used to be big fish in a small pond, now we are all minnows there, with two huge sharks."

News Corp chairman, Rupert Murdoch. (Reuters)

lots of Li way

"It is better to wait here for a day than to work for a year."

An unidentified Hong Kong man queuing to buy shares in the Li Ka-shing-backed dotcom venture, tom.com. (SCMP)

"They think they are buying Li Ka-shing and the Li family seems unstoppable these days."

Hong Kong broker, Philip Ho on the first trading day of tom.com shares. (SCMP)

"When the history of entertainment is written, the names of Viacom and CBS will stand larger than those of the latest dotcom IPOs."

Viacom chairman, Sumner Redstone, on the media environment after AOL's purchase of Time Warner. (Reuters)

"I have to work harder than ever to have my values recognised by the market, so that we don't become a breakfast snack for these other big companies."

News Corp chairman, Rupert Murdoch, on the warning that News Corp must unlock the value to its many assets

quickly or else it will be swallowed up by a predator. (Reuters)

"It's an accident of fate."

Alex Arena, group managing director, PCCW, on his role reversal from telecoms regulator. (AWSJ)

"Richard Li is not in the television business so far. He claims to be in the Internet business. His concept is extremely powerful, which is why his company is so successful without much income."

Gareth Chang, the then News Corp executive director and Star TV CEO, commenting on the possible impact of Richard Li's PCCW. (C&S Asia)

"He has a vision that no-one should be laughing at."

Chang on Richard Li. (C&S Asia)

"Do I have pay (TV) in my house? No I haven't."

Richard Alston, Australia's communications minister. (Australian Associated Press) 

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